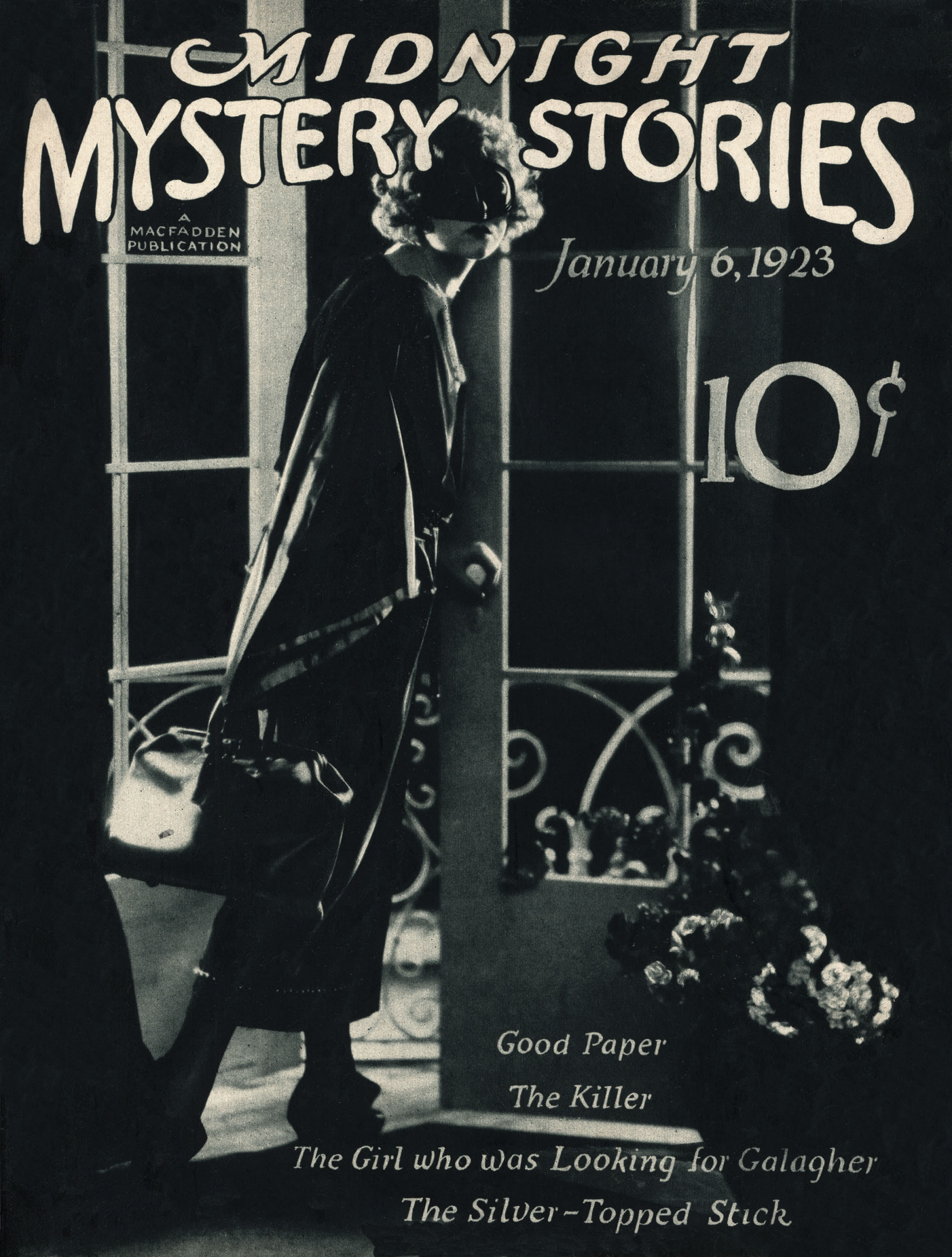
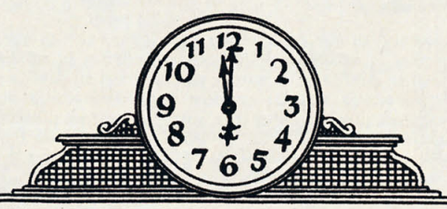

MIDNIGHT
MYSTERY STORIES
A MACFADDEN PUBLICATION
January 6, 1923
10¢
Good Paper
The Killer
The Girl who was Looking for Galagher
The Silver-Topped Stick

The Truth in Fiction

THE trouble with the old adage about the truth being stranger than fiction is that although many people quote it glibly, a lot of them do not believe it. It seems to us that you must really be an editor to understand how much that is true is contained in that old saw. Any editor will tell you that he knows of things happening every day that are so strange, so mysterious, or so coincidental, that he does not dare publish them. He is afraid readers will sneer at these stories, and remark "Romancing again, as usual," if, indeed, they don't accuse him of looking upon the hootch when it is artificially colored.

That has been the tradition with which most editors have worked—but in the case of MIDNIGHT MYSTERY STORIES that tradition has been cast aside, along with a great many other threadbare theories and traditions that have outgrown their usefulness. We, the Editors, emphatically believe that truth is stranger than fiction, but just as emphatically we do also believe that not only will our readers not disbelieve stories that we publish on that basis, but will actually prefer these stories to those that are patently untrue and made out of the whole cloth.

Hereafter MIDNIGHT MYSTERY STORIES will endeavor to present to you in some of our stories *fiction that has its inception in truth*, the romance and mystery that is imbedded in Life all around you. We think you will like it.



Next Week

CROOKED LANE, by Hamilton Craigie, is the name of the new two-part story, a fast, dizzy yarn of crooks and police, full of action, interest and suspense, to say nothing of mystery. George B. Jenkins has written TRICKED for us, and we are eternally grateful to him for turning out such a surprising, thrilling story. THE MENACE, by R. T. M. Scott is another tale of Smith, this popular writer's famous detective, whose acquaintance you made in THE KILLER this week. In THE USES OF AD-VERSE-ITY by Lyon Mearson you will get several good laughs, to say nothing of innumerable chuckles, besides the usual suspense.

Vol. 2 **MIDNIGHT MYSTERY STORIES** WHOLE No. 20

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Illustrations in this week were posed by the following cast, to whom grateful acknowledgment is made—Miss Madaline Northway, Miss Florence Brooks, Ralph Moreau, Louis De Klade, Scott McGee, Paul Walters, Charles Hancock, Arthur A. Gowin, and Russell Griswold.

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Next Week

THE TRENHOLME TEMPER DIES, by P. L. Atkinson, will interest you exceedingly, as it did us, and so will OUT OF THE DARK, by James Wilmer. GOOD PAPER comes to a roaring, heart-snatching finish, and the third installment of MIDNIGHT DOLLARS will hold you breathless. In addition, there will be a generous supply of True Ghost Stories, Heart Throbs and Unsolved Mysteries, and Ila Damon will vibrate another batch of anxious readers. Some Number!

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JANUARY Sixth 1923
MIDNIGHT MYSTERY STORIES
VOLUME 2 WHOLE NUMBER 20

Midnight Capture

by M. VINCENT

It was my turn to grin and feel thrilled, for I had captured the most notorious blackmailers in the East

JUST before midnight one night I stopped under a street lamp to change a tire. Having finished, I was about to step into the machine when a woman rushed out of the darkness and touched me on the arm.

"Won't you please come into my house. My husband has been taken violently sick. I don't know what to do."

In a flash I understood. She had seen the medical insignia on the radiator of the car, but before I could refuse she was off. I could do nothing but follow her into the house, up a staircase, into a bedroom. Once inside she closed the door.

The next moment she removed her cloak, and, much to my amazement stood in her night clothes. I was too bewildered to act or speak.

"He is in the next room," she said. "Oh, this affair has made me feel faint."

She began to waiver, and would have fallen but for my ready assistance. I held her, not knowing just what should be done when a sudden flash startled me. I heard a low chuckle, and presently a man with a camera appeared from behind the portieres.

"My husband," gasped the woman, shrinking from me.

The malicious grin on the man turned into an expression of horror as he beheld my revolver. It was my turn to grin and feel thrilled, for I at once realized that I had accidently captured the most notorious blackmailers in the East.

Out of courtesy, perhaps I should have explained to the couple that I belonged on the police force and was using my brother's car to get me down to headquarters to relieve the night chief, who had suddenly been taken sick,

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Goddard hastily stripped back the paper and opened the book

A two part story ~ PART I.

BY Marcel Wallenstein

Good

IT was unusual for Ely Goddard to visit the second hand book establishment before the close of the business day. His business acquaintances, seeing the first vice-president and operating head of the Cooper's National Bank before the drab little shop in this obscure neighborhood would have found occasion to speculate on the nature of his presence here. They knew him as an individual capable of perspiring ice-water. He examined their collateral with an expression which seemed to congeal the air of his office, regardless of the season.

On the other hand, Theodore Brunen, the elderly man who took a modest livelihood from the purchase and sale of second hand books, saw in Goddard only a kindly friend and fastidious collector. The friendship, taking seed years before on the occasion of one of the banker's seekings for a certain rare volume, had developed and expanded. Brunen had never been inside the doors of the marble and bronze depository of millions controlled by the banker, but twice a month or oftener they were together in the dingy semi-basement shop discussing their best loved topic, or occasionally opposing one another in a game of chess. In the city there were perhaps fewer than a dozen men whose appeal would have drawn Ely Goddard from his office in banking hours. Brunen was one of the few. Today's visit was not to be in the nature of the habitual call, but was the result of an unusual appeal from Brunen, who had telephoned Goddard an hour before.

Strange, the latter reflected, that Brunen should telephone. There had been that in his voice which in another could easily have been detected as agitation. Now that he thought of it, Goddard had never seen his placid friend agitated. Mildly elated, perhaps, over the acquisition of a much desired book, or slightly annoyed at a petty mishap, that was all. Brunen was not an emotional type, and years in his humdrum business apparently had caused him to

Book stores are not usually the mediums of wicked wiles. This one is hard to beat.

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The banker came forward. He had flipped back the cover

Paper

become incapable of the occasional outbursts which occur in most active men. But today he was admittedly worried and wanted immediate advice.

Through the narrow glass door at the front of his shop he watched with mild blue eyes for the approach of Goddard. He opened the door as the latter descended the three stone steps.

"How are you, Ely?" inquired Brunen in his soft, pleasant voice, gripping his friend's hand.

"Hello Brunen, what's up?"

The elderly book dealer offered an apology.

"Now that you're here," he confessed, "I'm rather ashamed of asking you to leave your office. I've been worried a little, but after all, it may be nothing."

"Is it money?"

It was a subject they had never touched on in their many discussions. Characteristically, Goddard attacked it bluntly.

"That's the last thing I could worry over," laughed Brunen. "No, it isn't money. I've enough to keep me and that's all most of us are entitled to." He paused, then added, "Ely, it seems I'm being drawn into something disreputable. But let's go back."

He led the way to the rear of the shop, passing between the shelves, on which in uneven ranks, one above the other, stood his stock of books. They were in decided contrast, these two friends. The banker was stocky, solidly knit and walked on short thick legs. His head, with its thinning coarse gray hair, the stubby nose and close-lying ears heightened the appearance of squareness. The impression of the whole was one of solid forcefulness and authority, and any of Goddard's business associates would have borne witness to the fact that it was not a false impression.

BRUNEN, ten or a dozen years older, was a head taller than Goddard, loose jointed and long of limb. His hair, what there was of it, was white, and he had the trick of dropping his chin and staring with his astigmatic blue eyes.

They stopped before a desk where Brunen kept the few records of his business and he took up a book bound in inexpensive blue cloth and handed it to Goddard.

"As a collector," asked Brunen, "what would you

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give for this report on the coal industry, a text book published last year and as good as new?"

"About fifteen cents," replied Goddard, after examining the work. "Offhand I should say it is about as rare and valuable a contribution as a street car advertising poster."

"And yet," said Brunen, "In a little while a man will come and offer five dollars, perhaps more, for it."

"Why?"

"I should like to know. Sit down there, Ely. I'll tell you what I know about it, and then I want your advice."

Brunen leaned back against the desk, staring down at his friend.

"A woman brought this this morning," he began. "I sent for her before you came. She should be in presently. She's rather a strange—but I want to explain it from the first.

"One morning three months ago, a man brought in a book he wanted to sell. It was a thing by Jenquill on lace-making in Belgium, not a book one would see in the average stock, and of no particular value to either the collector or the average reader. He offered it to me for a dollar and I refused. Then he came down to fifty cents, but I explained I had no market for it."

"'You're mistaken,' he insisted and then asked, 'You haven't another copy of this, have you?'

"I had none and told him so, and the information, for some reason, seemed to relieve him. I remember, he was fairly well dressed and did not look like a man in want. So, when he lowered the price to twenty-five cents I was surprised."

"'It's worthless to me,' I assured him and then he offered it to me for nothing.

"'I want to prove this book may be sold at a profit,' he said and forced it on me. 'Take it and pay me nothing and this afternoon a man will call and pay five dollars for it.'"

"Hmm," cut in Goddard who had listened quietly. "I can see several possibilities."

"But wait until you've heard the rest. He walked out before I could refuse, leaving me with the book. At five o'clock that day another man called and inquired for Jenquill on Lace. I produced the book, which he examined carefully, running rapidly through the pages. Finally he asked the price. I wanted to verify the other's promise and hazarded five dollars, never dreaming he would pay it. But he did without a whimper and walked out with it."

"The hand of an enterprising salesman now suggests itself," commented the banker. "And did they try to unload an entire stock on you?"

"No, I considered that among other solutions. Since that first day I have not seen the man who brought the first book. As I said, that was three months ago."

"And then?"

"A month later the woman I have just sent for brought another book with a similar proposition. She is somewhat of a neighborhood character, an unfortunate old thing whom everybody knows as Mattie. When she realized the book was of no use to me, she told me if I would give her fifty cents for it I could sell it that afternoon at a great profit. Remembering the affair of the previous month, I paid that price, and the same day my former customer came in and paid five dollars for Mattie's book.

"Another month passed and the incident was repeated. The old woman came in with another book, and this time insisted on having a dollar for it. The same man took it off my hands. That was last month. Again today Mattie was here and left this."

Goddard turned the blue-bound book over and began to examine it. On the sheet of glossy white paper which held the binding on the inside of the first cover was written a name in ink.

"Francis Guthrie," Goddard read aloud. "Probably the name of a former owner."

"Perhaps," replied Brunen, "Usually a person signs his name on one of the fly leaves. But in every instance the name has been written on the paper on the inside of the front cover. Now turn to Page 104."

Goddard did so and presently was intently studying a penciled notation on the upper margin of the page.

"The figure 75 and the letter M," he read. That must mean something."

"Undoubtedly. Each of the previous books had such a notation on the same page—104. The first, I remember, was 8 M, the next 12 M. Never anything more than the figures and the letters C. or M."

"A code!" exclaimed Goddard.

"So I believe, or a key to a code."

"AND whoever they are they're using the books, sending them through you as a means of communication. Why, Brunen, this may be a tremendous thing . . . and then it may be nothing," he finished lamely, slapping the book shut.

"But why couldn't they communicate through the mail?" insisted Brunen.

"It may be something in the book itself, something in the text."

"Possibly," admitted Brunen, "but I doubt it. I have compared the last three with similar volumes of the same editions, skimmed through every page and compared pages 104 word for word, without finding a single discrepancy."

As Brunen finished speaking the door of the shop opened and a woman came toward them through the dim aisle.

"Back here," called Brunen, and added in a low tone to the banker, "It's Mattie."

Mattie was a woman of indeterminable age. She may have been fifty—or sixty-five. Life had not used her very well. Wrinkles criss-crossed her flabby face; purplish red veins lay close under the skin of her bulbous nose; her hair of uncertain

As Brunen finished speaking, the door opened and a woman came toward them

hue, except where strands of rat gray were noticeable, was untidily held by brass hairpins visible from a distance of several feet. The wreck of a black hat surmounted by impossible roses of pink, yellow and white was on her head. Over her shoulders was a dilapitated cape of the mode popular thirty years ago. Her black shirt was grease-spotted and hung awry and her shoes were ancient and shapeless. A derelict was Mattie, but she carried herself with an air. It was whispered about, chiefly by herself, that she had been somebody in her youth—that she had lived.

At night it was Mattie's custom to take a stand on Broadway near the Metropolitan Opera House, waiting there in her shabby finery with a few papers in her hand, for the richly attired crowd. Sympathetic men who bought her papers learned they were likely to bear dates of from two days to a week previous. However, Mattie was not there to sell papers. Human interest was her real stock in trade. Sometimes she varied her wares by the addition of a few half wilted blossoms begged from a florist. Kindly persons seldom waited for Mattie to produce change for one-dollar bills and she was able to retain her furnished room not far from Brunen's bookshop, and to keep herself in a constant state of mild intoxication. Now she approached the two men with perfect assurance and bowed separately to each.

"How do you do, Mr. Brunen," she said in her best manner.

"Pretty well, Mattie; take this chair."

She spread herself in the chair and gazed interrogatively at Brunen who indicated the book before him on the desk.

"You sold me this to-day, Mattie."

"I did and you're going to make money on it," she replied defensively.

"How do you know that?" Goddard demanded suddenly, studying her with a careful eye.

She elevated her eyebrows until her old face wore a foolish expression which she fancied was that of hauteur any lady would exhibit under the circumstances.

"Have we met?" she asked with rising inflection.

"Mattie, my friend, Mr. Goddard," Brunen hastened to introduce them.

"Don't he always do that, dearie?" she asked sweetly of Goddard, now that she knew him. "Ain't that his business?"

"Where did you get it, Mattie?" asked Brunen.

Again she evaded the question parrying it with another. "Ain't it a good book?"

"That's not the question," he continued patiently, "We must know where you got it and the others you sold me."

SHE opened her eyes to the full extent of their droopy lids. "I came by it honestly," she replied in a tone that challenged him to question her integrity. Then she relapsed into her former airy demeanor and asked, "Why should the spirit of mortal be proud?"

"See here," Goddard interrupted curtly. "We're not getting anywhere." His manner was that known and feared by more than one recalcitrant borrower from the bank.

"We want to know where you got those books and we want to know quick!"

Stronger characters than Old Mattie had quailed before that square set face and forbidding manner. She began to whimper.

"I'm a poor woman," she sniffled, although the alcoholic aroma of her breath bespoke an ability to pay bootleg prices.

She put on her professional expression of tragic woe, the one which brought excellent results on a rainy night in the street near the Opera, but it moved Goddard not at all.

"Well?" he demanded harshly.

"It's the first time in all my life anybody's accused me of dishonesty," she wailed.

"No one's accusing you of anything, Mattie," said Brunen soothingly. "We have a good reason for wanting to know about the books. Come now."

She looked up appealingly at him, dabbing her eyes with a dirty handkerchief which she had produced from beneath the folds of her cape. "There ain't any secret about it, so far's I'm concerned," she said, "but there wasn't any call for him to jump at me like he did."

"I'm sorry, of course," replied Goddard perfunctorily and waited for her explanation.

"This is the God's truth, as I'm a lady," she declared, "I don't know where them books came from that is, I don't know exactly."

"Don't know?"

"No, sir; I don't know. I get 'em through the mail, part of the time, and part of the time by messenger."

"Go on," commanded Goddard grimly.

"They're sent to me by a party, a gentleman friend of mine."

"Tell us about him. Who is he?"

"I don't know the gentleman. He never told me his name. Don't you know him, Mr. Brunen?"

"Certainly not," denied the book dealer, "that's why I sent for you."

"He knows you, 'cause he told me about you. I'm standing outside the Opera one night, trying to earn a few pennies when this gentleman comes by. He's seen me here often, he says, like anybody else. It's s'prising how many of the gentlemen get to know Old Mattie, and he wants to help me out. Just like one of you gentlemen, or any of my friends.

"'Do you know Brunen's bookstore?' he asks me, and I say to him 'That nice Mr. Brunen?' and he replies it's the same man. Well,"—she rambled on animatedly "this gentleman, and a nice-looking man he was, too, wanted to help me and so he says he'll send me the books one at a time.

"'Take 'em in to Mr. Brunen,' he says, 'an' sometimes he'll give you a dollar for 'em an' sometimes more;' but you never give me more, do you?"

She paused for a reply and when it was not forth-

Continued on page 14

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The man caught up Fred's stick and brought it down with fearful violence

Do dreams foreshadow events? This woman, fearing ridicule, kept her vision secret — now she carries the after-shadow over her heart

BY W. R GILBERT

The Silver-topped Stick

WHEN pretty May Bothwell, my dearest friend, married, her home was in a little country-house belonging to her husband, an artist just beginning to make his mark. His house was three miles from the nearest station, and in a very lonely place, which was, he assured me, its chief attraction. A private road led from the highway to a stream across which a rustic bridge was thrown; on the other side was a meadow belonging to Fred Bothwell, and at the end of this was the entrance to the house. It stood well back, with a lawn and shrubbery in front; a sweet little lodge was at the gates, and the gardener, an elderly single man, had his home there.

"We don't need a lodge-keeper," laughed May, leading me into her domain when I came to pay her my promised visit a few months after her marriage. "We don't have visitors. It's a difficult place to get at."

"It's a pretty place," I remarked, "but frightfully lonely."

"Well, it is," May admitted, "but the country round is lovely. Fred works twice as well in this lonely place, too, as he used when he could never reckon on being let alone. He can't endure anyone near him while he's at work; he won't even let me come when he's off for a day's painting. Now, are you ready to come down to tea?"

We went downstairs together. Fred was in the hall, on the point of going out; as we reached the turn of the stairs, he shut the door behind him.

"Oh, he's forgotten his stick!" cried May, running down a few steps; then she stopped short, exclaiming, "How stupid of me! I really thought Fred had hooked his stick over the banisters, as he generally does when he's getting his things together, and had forgotten it; but I'm mistaken, I see. He never goes out without that stick," she added, smiling. "I gave it to him. It's very handsome. You must look at it when Fred brings it in."

It was very handsome, thick and heavy, an effective weapon against any tramp Fred might meet on his lonely country rambles in search of picturesque nooks. The curved handle was silver, with the owner's name and address engraved on it.

We had tea and then strolled out into the meadow, revelling in the sweet summer air, until the light began to go, which was the recognized signal that it was time to go home and get ready for dinner. As we entered the hall May gave an impatient exclamation.

"What can throw that strange shadow on the stairs?" she said. "As I came in, I could have sowrn I saw Fred's stick hanging there, but the next moment I saw there was nothing. Didn't it look like it?"

I shook my head. I had seen nothing in the least like a stick.

The pleasant days drifted past, and my visit came to an end. Several times May had drawn my attention to the shadow on the stairs, but I had never been able to see it; neither had Fred, who was to cycle with us to the station, should he come in. My baggage had been sent on earlier in the day, and we had made liberal allowance for Fred's unpunctual habits, so we sat calmly chatting. Suddenly May started up and looked out of the window.

"Why, there's Jenkins with Fred's stick!" she cried.

I glanced out. The gardener, whom I had not previously seen, was trundling a wheelbarrow down one of the paths. He was a broad, thick-set man, though elderly, but as he faced the other way the back view was all I had of him.

"What do you mean, May?" I asked. "The man has no stick. Both his hands are on the wheelbarrow handles."

May was staring out.

"Yes, I see that now," she answered, very slowly. "I don't know how my eyes could have deceived me, but I certainly thought—I certainly saw him brandish a stick in his right hand, and it was Fred's."

"What a curious thing! Brandish a stick?"

"Yes, he brought it down with such a savage gesture, it quite frightened me. You don't mean to say you didn't see it?"

"Indeed I didn't. Your nerves must be out of order," I protested.

I WAS to repeat my visit in the following spring before Fred and May came up to town for the opening of the Royal Academy, and as neither May nor myself were fond of letter-writing, a brief note now and then was all that passed between us during the winter.

It was on a wild March night that I had the memorable dream of my life. I had gone to bed at my usual hour, feeling in no way nervous or overstrained. The wind was howling round the house, but I lounged comfortably by my cosy bedroom fire, and laughed over a humorous novel. When I grew sleepy, I laid the book aside and began leisurely to prepare for bed. For some time I lay placidly,

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It was the evil face I had seen in my dreams

watching the dying fire and listening to the shrieking of the wind, and then I fell asleep. At first my slumber must have been of the usual deep unconsciousness I almost always enjoy, but gradually I became aware of someone insistently calling my name.

"Yes? What is it? Who is it?" I asked drowsily, just conscious that I was in bed and had been asleep.

"It's I; it's May," replied the voice, and, rousing myself, I found that I was in bed in "The Bothie," and that May Bothwell was standing by my bedside. I was vaguely conscious that I ought not to be there, but could not tell how I came to be in my friend's house when I remembered falling asleep in my own home.

"What is it?" I repeated, sitting up.

May's face was ashen in the moonlight, and her eyes were full of terror.

"There's someone in the house," she whispered. "I hear him creeping about the dining-room, where the silver is, and Fred's away, you know."

"Ring for the maids," I suggested. "The sound of the bell may frighten him off, or, if not, both Jane and cook are strong, and if there's only one man, and he isn't armed——"

"Don't you remember cook was called away to her dying mother this morning?" broke in May. "And Jane sprained her wrist the other day, so she isn't much use."

"What about the gardener?" I asked. "If we locked the bedroom door, opened the window, and screamed for Jenkins, wouldn't he hear us?"

"I'm sure he wouldn't. I hear one step only; I'll creep down and see what's going on."

Fascinated in some strange way, I rose and followed her to the top of the stairs where she paused a moment. The hall was flooded with moonlight, and every object was distinctly visible. I saw plainly Fred's stick hooked over the rail, the heavy silver top glittering in the moonbeams. Step by step May crept downstairs, noiseless as a mouse, until she had nearly got to the bottom. Then one of the stairs creaked, and instantly a man appeared at the dining-room door. He was thickset and broad, with an evil face, with light blue eyes that looked odd without eyebrows or lashes, a pale-red skin, a long upper lip, huge mouth, and a finger-length scar on his cheek.

May dashed down into the hall and confronted him. She spoke to him but the words rushed past my ears without leaving any impression. I tried to move, but I was paralyzed, and remained motionless at the top of the stairs. The man grinned from ear to ear as May ceased speaking, caught Fred's stick from where it hung, and brought it down with fearful violence full on May's temple. She fell, covered with blood. Then horror seemed to release me from the power that held me motionless. I rushed downstairs.

"Murderer! Fiend!" I shrieked. "You have murdered her!"

Then, as I still stared into his evil face, he seized me by the throat, swinging the stick high in the air, but before the blow fell I had lost consciousness.

SLOWLY I came to myself; slowly I raised myself on my elbow; eagerly I gazed round the room. I was in my room, my own pretty, peaceful bedroom, the sunlight streaming in at the windows, the fresh spring air blowing in over my face. It had all been a hideous dream.

I drew a long breath of relief, and sat up as a tap at the door heralded tea and letters. One envelope bore May's writing, and I pounced eagerly on it. May was quite well and wrote in the best of spirits. Yesterday morning—Tuesday—Fred had gone to London to interview a picture-dealer, and buy some frames, in addition to some other business, and May wanted me to meet him at Paddington on Thursday morning at twelve-fifteen, and come down with him for a fortnight's visit.

The relief at first was great, but by and by the dream came back to me. Could it have been sent as a warning? May would be two nights alone; might she not be in danger of some kind? For an hour at least I considered the matter. Should I tell Fred of my fearful dream and get him to do something to protect his wife? I knew where he stayed when in London; should I telephone? How he would laugh at me, I thought, and decided to keep my dream to myself.

On the following day I was on the appointed platform at the time fixed, and soon Fred and I were speeding towards "The Bothie."

"So May has been alone for two nights," I remarked. "Wasn't she nervous?"

"Oh, not May! She's such a plucky girl. I had a note from her on Wednesday morning, reporting all well, except that Jane had sprained her wrist, and another this morning telling me she was all right, but cook had been called away to her dying mother. Nuisance, but of course she had to let the poor girl go at once."

I started, for my hideous dream came back to me, and almost without volition I found myself asking him:

"Have you your stick with you?"

He looked surprised.

"No, I forgot it for the first time since May gave it to me. I hooked it over the stair-rail while getting my traps together, and in the hurry of getting off, I forgot it. Why do you ask?"

I made no answer. It was an express train; we were hurrying at full speed to where I should discover whether my dreadful dream had been but a dream or a warning which I had refused to take.

To Fred's surprise there was nothing to meet us at the station, and the buggy we secured took us slowly along the country roads as far as the river bank. However, it did not take us long to cross the bridge and meadow, and to reach the gates.

"Well, you are in a hurry," observed Fred once or twice, looking at me in surprise, but his own steps were fleet. It was the first time he had left his young wife since their marriage.

The door was opened to us by Jane, her eyes red with weeping. As she saw us, she burst into tears, and a constable elbowed her aside.

"A terrible thing has happened, sir," he began. "Your house was broken into last night, and your wife——"

He paused, but I knew as well what was coming as if he had finished his sentence.

"My wife?" Fred repeated. "Where is she? Has she been frightened? Hurt?"

Then they broke it to him gently. Jane had heard some disturbance in the night, but was too frightened to come down. In the morning she had found her mistress lying dead in a pool of blood at the foot of the stairs. Evidently burglars had broken in, and, being disturbed by Mrs. Bothwell, one had struck her a murderous blow with the silver-headed stick which was lying beside her. The dining-room window was open, and the place had been ransacked.

After a time, Fred asked to see Jenkins, the gardener.

"He may have seen the fellows hanging about," he said, "and be able to give a description of them. I'll rest neither day nor night till I hunt down the man who murdered my little girl."

I had gone upstairs to see my poor friend, lying very quiet and lovely on her bed, the blood washed from her face, and the cruel wound on her temple hidden. As I came downstairs again I heard a voice in the hall. It was Jenkins answering his master.

"No, sir, I never seed nobody hanging about," he said slowly, and just then he heard my step and looked up. Just Heavens! It was the evil face I had seen in my dream. I flew down.

"Murderer! Fiend! I shrieked. "You have murdered her!"

He staggered back.

"Good God! The woman who saw me kill the mistress—the woman on the stairs," he cried.

IN an instant Fred was upon him, and before the constable could rescue him he was rather badly damaged. He was in a state of abject terror, his teeth chattering in his head, and hardly noticed Fred's handling.

"I'll confess; I'll go quietly," he raved, "only take me away. Take me away from that woman, the woman who saw me do it."

He paid no attention to the constable's warning that what he said would be used in evidence against him, and was finally taken away in a state of utter collapse. He insisted that he had not intended murder, only robbery, but when May came down and, recognizing him, had threatened him with arrest for burglarly as soon as his master returned, he had caught up the stick hanging on the rail, and struck her down.

"If the stick hadn't been there, if the master had taken it with him as he always did, there wouldn't have been no murder," he wailed. "I'd ha' knocked her down wi' my fist maybe, but I'd never ha' killed her."

He went on to say that as she fell he heard a scream, and a woman flew down the stairs, calling him murderer; frenzied with terror, he aimed a blow at her. Instantly she was gone, and the moonlight shone only on the dead woman at his feet.

But I never told Fred of the dream that might have saved May's life, had I told it to him in time.

NEXT WEEK

"THE DEATH WATCH"

by

Carl Aylmer

A yarn that will bring you to your feet with thrills and surprise

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He killed his dog, but the faithful animal knew long after he discovered the truth, and regretted

A pet — true unto death — saw deep into the great, blue, thoughtful eyes of his young wife. A page out of life itself

"I think I shall retire," my wife said suddenly, rising. "I—the lightning frightens me"

The Fatal Instinct

by JOHN STANTON

AS I write this, the fury of a tropical storm at its worst seems to concentrate itself upon my adobe shack far off here in this heart-subduing wilderness thirty miles from the village of Parang. With clouds bursting and lightning flashing its warning of the thunder's crash, I feel that life is closing in on me, for I sense the basilisk eyes of frightful creatures surrounding—and I am the cynosure of all those eyes! I sit here by the dying embers' glow—alone, alone—and I write, hoping, by this method, to alleviate the torment of my soul; for I fear such a night. For my life? No, no. I am fearful lest the memories of long ago, which a night like this brings so vividly to my mind, drive me—a raving maniac—out into the darkness to wander aimlessly on and on——

How the years have passed since I first took refuge in the interior of this island! And I am old—old before my time. When I landed here, I was tall and straight. The natives looked upon me with suspicion, but now they call me Tuon Monbo and have long since accepted me as a harmless anchorite. They let me strictly alone; which is what I desire above all things. I came here because, on just such a night as this, I lost the joy of life. I lost——

It was fourteen years back. My wife and I lived in a suburb of St. Louis—to be exact: Webster Groves. I was happy with her, for I worshipped that beautiful, little, doll-like woman with her great, blue, thoughtful eyes and her serious demeanor, which so belied her delicate appearance! How was I to know that she did not love me and that she was discontented? She didn't tell me so and she was, I discovered, a clever actress. No, she never told me. I had to find it out for myself.

The only other member of our household (we had no maid) was Bob, my English bulldog. I had come into possession of him while attending Washington University, and had taken him with me on a tour of the states. We were pals. The old boy understood me better than any other, and to use a shop-worn phrase, "would have died for me."

For a bull, he was monstrous; his color was a kind of brown mixture, for the most part a dark shade and light in spots. His teeth were extraordinarily long and the set of his jowl was awe-inspiring to a stranger. Poor old boy—to those who meant well—he was as harmless as a kitten. To conclude his description, he had brains, that dog. Of course I should say instinct, but I repeat that Old Bob had brains.

Well, time passed in its humdrum way—and one night I came home from my place of business in St. Louis to find that a guest had arrived from the east. Esther, my wife, introduced me and added that she had known Mr. Eugene Darrel back in her home town—Albany. I shook hands with him, at the same time inviting him to make himself at home and all that sort of thing. Esther had never mentioned the man to me before, although she seldom spoke of her younger days in Albany and I thought nothing about that.

After dinner, we seated ourselves in the living room and presently I rose and walked to the tobacco stand which stood in the far corner of the room. I happened to glance down at Bob who was cuddled up near my chair. The dull glow of a heavily shaded lamp was sufficient light to enable me to observe his attitude. I kept myself from actually staggering, in my surprise at the expression in that dog's eyes as he riveted them on the face of our guest.

I took hold of the stand and moved it slowly across the room, all the while watching Bob, for I thought he might be ill. I had never seen him regard anyone in that way during all the years he had been with me. Usually, in fact, when not dozing by my chair, he would have those brown eyes turned up to my face and then, his was the gaze of faithful devotion. But now! I didn't understand it at all.

I placed the stand alongside Darrel's chair and offered him a cigar. We each lighted one and commenced the inevitable variety of small talk. My wife had very little to say about anything that evening and was apparently disturbed about something, I thought. Evidently she had not noticed anything out of the ordinary with Bob. But as the evening wore on, I became more and more perplexed. The dog had scarcely moved a muscle; he never closed his eyes for a single moment. Through that long evening, he remained at my side in the shadow and I did not even hear him breathe. Several times I shifted about on one pretext or another in order to get a look at him. His eyes were narrowed, menacing—always upon the face of the stranger.

WHEN Darrel had left us, at about midnight, I turned toward Bob. He approached me, his little tail wagging furiously and his teeth clicking together in the peculiar chattering way he had when he was particularly pleased. And he was pleased now, I could see that.

Before the week was out, Eugene Darrel came again. Naturally, for the sake of politeness, I had asked him to drop in again (he had told me that he intended to remain in St. Louis for several weeks) but I was hardly prepared for such a speedy return visit. The fact is that I didn't like the man. It was not merely that I disliked his manner, but it upset me to see Bob regard him in that way.

As soon as Darrel's voice reached the dog, he emitted a low growl and retreated to the shadow of my chair and began his vigil silently and with the same expression as on the previous occassion. On that second night I could not but note how my wife studiously avoided looking in Darrel's direction. Not only that, but she hardly spoke to him at all. I thought this strange, inasmuch as she had evidently known him for a long time. I wondered whether she disliked the man as I did, and then, when he had taken his departure, cast the thought of him from my mind as being, from a psychological standpoint, an unsalubrious subject upon which to dwell.

So he came again, and again, and every time he came, my dog retreated to the shadow and began the same silently menacing scrutiny which he never relaxed until after the object of it had gone on his way.

One month had passed since Gene—as my wife called him—had first come to our house. Esther had developed a habit of taking numerous one day trips. She would explain to me in the evening that she had been to Hannibal, Sainte Genevieve or some other nearby town. She returned one night after eleven o'clock and stated that she had been to Cape Girardeau that day and the train was late getting in.

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She never mentioned St. Louis and it didn't occur to me that this was, in itself, significant. Blind fool that I was, I saw nothing suspicious in that, and the fact that she had rarely gone anywhere without me during the days before Darrel had come from the East, did not strike me until too late. I was not acquainted with the friends whom she was supposed to be visiting in these various places, but that meant nothing to me either. Our neighbors may have noticed something, but not I. That's usually the way isn't it? I, the most concerned, was the last to know that anything was wrong. Knowledge came to me "like a bolt out of a clear sky"—but the sky was far from clear, in truth, when I learned the real state of affairs.

Darrel was coming again for dinner. When he did, and I opened the front door for him to enter, the strong wind preceding a lightning storm blew the newspaper from our table; the smoldering logs in the fireplace flared up and died down again as I quickly closed the door. The man (I remembered it later) appeared to be excited as he walked to the hat-rack, talking fast while divesting himself of his top-coat.

The thunder rumbled overhead and the clouds were darkening the early night as we sat down to dinner. This finished, we grouped ourselves before the fire as we always had done before. We were the same party on that fateful night as on the first; the setting the same—even to the dog who crouched in the darkness of my big chair and watched Darrel with eyes half closed yet piercing—menacing. I never knew whether the fellow was aware, as he stretched his long, thin legs toward the fire, that he was under guard, so to speak. If he was, he certainly manifested no anxiety about it.

THE night dragged on. The thunder clapped and the lightning flashed bright rays at our windows as if soliciting admission to the room in which we sat.

"I think I shall retire," my wife said suddenly, rising. "I—the lightning frightens me."

She advanced a step to Darrel, who had also risen to his feet. "Good night, Gene," she said.

She looked very small and doll-like standing there as she nervously shook hands with him. The thunder and lightning were startlingly severe. That would account for her agitation.

There was a silence between us two after Esther had gone to her room, which lasted several minutes. The rain drenched the windows and descended with such violence that it struck the roof of the porch with a sonorous clatter. My dog was ominously quiet and I knew without looking behind me, just what his posture was like. I thought I would have to do the only thing under the circumstances, so I said: "We have a spare room for you, Mr. Darrel. You can't venture out in such a storm."

He had started involuntarily at my first word. Apparently, the storm had him frightened also, but——

"Oh, I'll be all right," he returned, speaking in a loud voice. "I must be back in town tonight. I'd better start now too. It is——" (looking at his watch) "past the witching hour. I didn't intend to stay so long. Hope I have not kept you out of your bed."

"No, I very seldom turn in until twelve. You're welcome to that spare room."

"No, thanks."

He rose and said, "We'll have a little bracer before I go." He produced a silver flask. "Will you kindly fetch the wine glasses. This may ward off a cold for me. I see I'm going to get wet." He laughed rather boisterously and added, as he unscrewed the top of the flask: "This is imported stuff. You'll like it; make you sleep better."

Well, I wasn't averse to a bracer, especially when it happened to be imported stuff, so I stepped from the living room into the dining room for the glasses.

Great God, will I ever forget for one minute of my waking hours, the unearthly howl which pierced my ears and froze the blood in my veins just as I reached the buffet in the unlighted dining room! This was followed immediately by a scream from a human throat—of terror and pain—and then there was the sound of breaking furniture, the thud of a heavy body upon the floor. All before I could summon presence of mind to dash back into the other room to a scene, which, when I beheld it, nearly drove me wild.

"Bob!" I shouted, a sense of horror gripping me. "Bob! My God, don't do that. Bob, Bob!"

I dove at the frenzied animal as his teeth forced their way closer and closer together in the throat of Eugene Darrel who writhed in an impotent attempt to free himself from the weight of the furious dog whose body lay across his chest.

I clutched my dog by the throat and squeezed with all the power of desperation, which increased as I saw the blood streaming from between his foaming lips. I commanded him; I pleaded with him; I punched, kicked him. And still those blazing eyes held their light of hate. They meant death, and I never had a chance to save the man. He was doomed.

I had forgotten completely about Esther. Now I observed her huddled form upon the floor at the foot of the stairs. In my excitement I had not heard her come down. She had fainted. Even as I staggered—now in a condition of mental chaos—away from the growling, foaming beast and his prey, toward her, she regained consciousness.

"Save him!" she screamed. "He's killing him. Why don't you do something? Oh, God, save him! Kill the dog. The andiron—quick!"

Without a second's thought, I rushed to the fire place and—utterly disregarding the heat of the andiron—I grasped the end of it with both hands and jerked it clear, scattering a shower of sparks all about as I did so. With this formidable weapon poised high above my head, I sprang forward, and with all the strength I could muster, brought it down and—crushed in the skull of my dog.

MY faithful Bob! As he rolled over, he looked up into my face, and if ever loving devotion shone out of the eyes of man or beast, it shone out from from the eyes of that old boy as he slowly closed them and stretched himself dead beside the lifeless body of Eugene Darrel—his victim.

As I stood there breathing heavily, much confused by the kaleidoscopic swiftness of it all, I was even more dumbfounded to behold my wife rush to the dead man's side and kneel there moaning, half hysterical. She lifted the head to her lap and caressed that once handsome, cynical face!

"Gene, Gene, speak to me! Speak to me, dear. Dead, dead! Oh, if I could but take your place. Gene, Gene, I love you. I——Yes, I loved him!" She screamed this up at me. "And I hate you. You could have saved him. You, you—and your accursed dog. I hate you both!"

She broke into a paroxysm of tears and collapsed with her arm tightly encircling the blood-reeking neck of her lover.

A bolt out of a clear sky? Yes. At her words, the joy of life died within me.

I staggered out into the night and floundered through by-ways to the open country. Near break of day, when the worst of the storm had passed, I crept wearily back to what I had once called home. I entered and found Esther where I had left her! She was moaning and caressing the face of the dead man, and she did not so much as glance at me as I walked close to the body of dear old Bob and stood looking down. He had been my best friend and I had killed him.

I espied the silver flask lying upon the floor and picked it up almost mechanically. It was a beautiful piece of work with a design of a dragon engraved on it. The fatalism of this impressed me at once. A dragon on a whiskey flask! I gazed once more at the body of my dog and then made my way, with a choking sob, from the house of tragedy.

A few days later in San Francisco—shortly before I left my own country forever, I had the contents of *his* flask analyzed. The "imported stuff" had had for me a peculiar odor and I could not banish the thought from my mind that something was wrong with it, and I wanted to know.

The chemist told me. It was much worse than I had suspected. Knock-out drops would have been bad enough; but I learned that the whiskey was plentifully charged with a deadly Oriental poison which the Chinese facetiously refer to as "toes up." Only a few drops, taken internally, are required to cause death.

If I had known of the contents of that flask *then*—Bob would never have died as he did. A "dumb" animal and yet—he knew from the beginning what I found out after I had killed him.

So, on a night like this, when the thunder rocks this tropical isle, and the lightning flashes at the window of my ADOBE shack, and the rain washes the mud from its roof, I fear lest my unbidden memories drive me—a raving maniac—out into the darkness to wander aimlessly on—and on.

The Week's Unsolved Mysteries

DO YOU KNOW THIS MURDERED GIRL? After deciding that beautiful Rose Shannessey committed suicide the hand of the law reached down into the grave in an attempt to tear away the shroud of mystery which surrounds her death since it became known that her body was found in the apartment of a rich Parisian bachelor, and not in her own Paris studio as was first believed.

After exhuming the body and subjecting it to a thorough microscopic examination the French officials came to the positive conclusion that her bullet wounds were not self-inflicted. Now the gendarmes are confronted with two mysteries in her case.

Who killed her?

Who is she?

These are the two unanswered questions racking the minds of the police. It is believed that she is a former resident of Minneapolis. If you know a missing Rose Shannessey from that town communicate with the Prefect of Gendarmes, Paris, France.

* * * * *

FIVE MEN ARE HELD FOR ONE WOMAN'S MURDER in New Jersey. Each man is being questioned and detained on separate clews but to date none of the suspected quintet have uttered a word which the Bergen County Officials can use as an indication of guilt against them. The crime in question is the mysterious killing of Christine Hervish, 17, whose body was found near a greenhouse near Wellington, N. J.

Of the five men held two have scratches on their faces which led to the belief in police circles that they had been in an encounter with a woman. One of these men said his cat scratched him the other said his wife had scratched his face.

* * * * *

THIS BARTENDER DIED A HERO! The police of New York City are combing the haunts of underworld men for the two bandits who killed Michael Nesil when he refused to let them get away with the money in his saloon's cash register. Nesil was standing behind the bar, and the saloon was empty when two men entered suddenly and pointing gleaming revolvers at him demanded that he throw up his arms

As his arms flashed upwards the bartender picked up a heavy bottle. There was a sharp report—glass tinkled to the floor. Another shot barked out—the bartender crumpled into a dead heap on the floor. When some war veterans who were holding a meeting next to the place entered the saloon they found the bandits gone.

* * * * *

WANTED—A MAN TO CLAIM THE BODY of his wife and his two-year old baby boy. Apply to Bellevue Hospital." Such was the tragic advertisement in a New York daily which proclaimed the mystery surrounding the identity of this unfortunate mother and child.

The woman collapsed on a street corner and was sent to a hospital where she died later of cerebral hemorrhage. The little boy, crying "Mama—Papa" through the night brought tears to the eyes of nurses and doctors who did all they could to discover his identity and that of his dead mother. Although this advertisement was broadcasted throughout New York and New Jersey it received no response.

* * * * *

CHICAGO GUNMEN ARE THE MOST DANGEROUS—or so it would appear from their utter disregard for human life in the latest raid attempted in the Windy City. A gang of armed bandits entered the Waiters' Club and after lining forty patrons against the wall, deliberately killed Frank J. Ragen, and shot a police sergeant through the heart without any reason except that they wished to thoroughly intimidate their victims.

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She showed him the muzzle of a small revolver. Yalla's smile changed.

Will a woman kill the man she loves? This story gives you the answer.

The Girl who was looking for Galagher

BY SUZANNE BUCK

IT was a shady rendezvous, located on the cool side of a sunbaked street. Swinging doors gave access to a sanded floor and to a bar. At the side were two large lamps a bit too garish for a private entrance, flanking stoop, a set of tables, chairs, and a pianola; a special waiter gave attention to the mixed thirst of half a dozen mixed quartettes.

The air was thick. A tent of smoke enclosed it. Music blared and laughter rang while hatless, coatless men bent over women whose hand-painted colors ran in perspiration. Hard eyes—! Soft eyes—! And alternate shoulders lifted to the brazen syncopation of the pianola. Yes, vacation indoors on the cool side of a sunbaked street and certainly a shady situation—for a shady situation.

Up against a wall and sitting at a square wood table all alone, young Michael Carney, "Yalla" for the reason of his jaundiced skin, flung back his massive head to gaze with half-closed eyes upon the girl who came in from the breezeless night. Her red eyes, sunken cheeks and trembling hands gave evidence that sleep, too long denied, was taking its revenge.

The girl was Irene Rankin. With her skirt too long, her waist too short; hatless, and her pretty, determined face brighter for the faded roses of her cheeks, a post-season fur neckpiece over her arm, she gazed upon the bull-necked 'Yalla' with a question in her sleepless eyes.

" 'lo Yalla! Seen Tom Galagher? I'm lookin' for 'im!"

"Irene! Oh, hello!" he said. "Sit down! Here waiter! Beer——!"

The young girl crumpled up into a chair. The young man, swinging straighter on his elbows, eaned upon his arms.

"Irene, say——! What's the matter?"

"Nothin'!"

"You look shot t'pieces."

"Do I?" Irene Rankin passed a sleazy arm across her sleepless eyes. "I ain't slept lately."

"Kid, y'look it. What's the trouble?"

"Ain't I tellin' y'? I'm lookin' for 'im."

"Galagher!" he said. He blinked his eyes. "For what?"

She spat hate.

"I'm gonna kill 'im!"

"Rene——!" He shot a furtive glance about the noisy room. "Soft pedal! Want somebody else t'hear y'?"

"I don't care!"

He hacked a laugh out.

"Lucky that piano s'goin'. Tell me all about it! Rene——!" He bent down closer. "I'm your friend."

The young girl shrilled hysteric laughter.

"Say, he threw me down! He threw me down!"

"Aw, you should worry. Rene, whose baby——?"

"Stop!" she said. She rested on her folded hands. "I'm gonna kill 'im, see? I'm gonna kill 'im!"

"Irene, aw g'wan——" he said.

Her small white fists showed red around the knuckles.

"Yalla, sure I'm gonna kill 'im! Ain't I tellin' y', he threw me down!" Her head sank deeper in her trembling hands. "I'm gonna kill 'im!"

"Rene!!"

"He threw me down!"

"F'who?"

Her shrill voice stabbed the music.

"I don't know! I never seen 'er! But I heard! I heard!" She sank her vicious teeth upon her hand.

"We had a scrap! I went t'Flossie's, Yalla, you know Flossie! Think ye came an' got me?"

"I would, Renie."

"But *he* never did! I hear he's got this other girl up in the flat." she said. Her teeth clinched tightly. "Yal, I'm gonna kill 'im! Oh, I'm gonna kill 'im!"

"Are y'?"

"Sure!"

"With what?" he said.

She showed the muzzle of a small revolver which she drew from the fur neckpiece. Yalla's smile changed to a look of terror.

"Hide it! Hide se gat! You wanna get yourself in dutch?"

THE young girl loosed her insane laughter.

"Think I care?"

"Aw, Rene——"

"I'm gonna kill 'im!"

"Don't y'be a fool. There's other fellows——"

"I don't want 'em!"

"Rene, you'll get yourself sent up f'life!"

"I told y' I don't care!" she said. Once more her sleazy arm caressed her eyes. "Y'think I wanna keep on livin' when I know he's got another girl? I ain't got no more use f'livin'. Yalla——" She leaned forward tensely. "I could throw m'self right in the river *now!*—except I couldn't rest when I knew he had another girl." Her weary head fell forward. "No, I couldn't rest! I couldn't rest! I got t'kill 'im!"

"Renie——"

"Lemme be!" she said.

He bent down closer.

"You don't wanna kill 'im."

(*Continued on page* 25)

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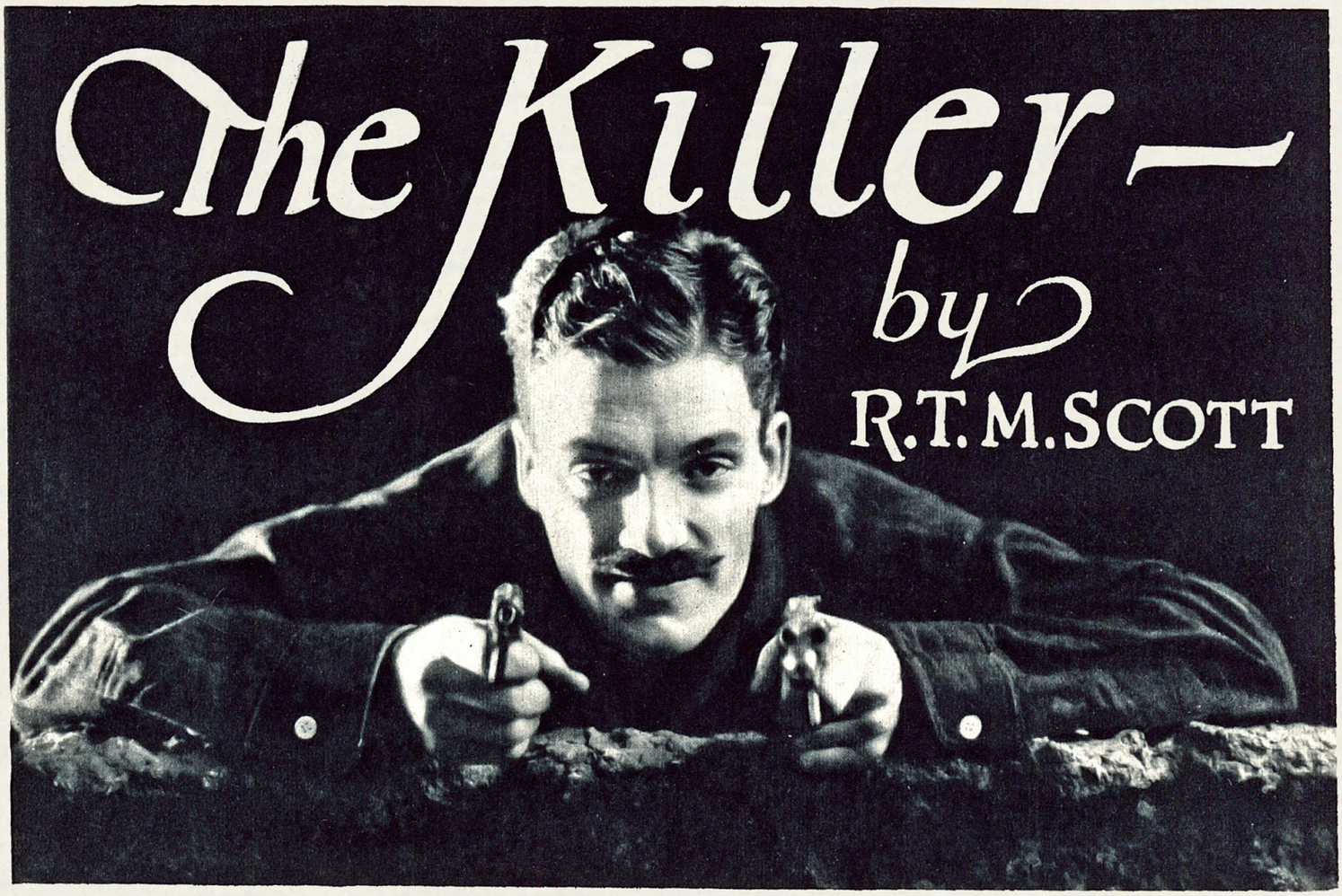
The Killer—

by R.T.M. SCOTT



MOTOR cars do not crawl in Chicago. They have a way of covering the ground that stops the breath of people who come from cities with shorter blocks. Consequently there was a tremendous screaming of brakes on a Michigan Avenue corner as a man leapt from the door of his speeding taxi and a traffic officer blew his whistle with both arms in the air. There was almost a panic as the brakes ground and tires skidded. Shouts and curses came from all sides.

In the confusion the tall figure of the man who had made the wild jump was seen for but a moment. With wonderful agility he landed on his feet and dodged between cars before stooping and picking up a dirty, yellow dog which, half a minute earlier, had been knocked senseless by a passing cab. He vanished from sight almost as quickly as he had appeared by the simple process of passing around the nearest taxi, entering by the opposite door and handing the driver a ten dollar bill with directions to beat it down a side street. The tall man leaned back with the inert dog in his lap and the taxi was just starting its sneak away from the traffic officer when a small boy burst the door open again.

"Gee, mister! Yuh got me dog?" he asked breathlessly.

For answer the tall man reached out a long arm and lifted the kid inside by the collar. He plumped him down on the seat and handed over the limp dog as the taxi gathered speed.

The boy took the dog into his arms and hugged it. Tears coursed down his rather dirty cheeks and were wiped away with a ragged sleeve. A tuft of red hair stuck through a hole in his cap.

"He's not dead," said the man as he leisurely lighted a cigarette. "Feel it beat," he added and pressed one o the urchin's small hands against the dog's thinly covered ribs.

Almost at once the animal showed signs of life and lifted its small head.

The man ran searching fingers over the legs and ribs.

"Just as I thought," he commented. "Stunned by a glancing blow from a tire and not a bone broken. Had to pick him up in a hurry or he would have been mangled by the cars in rear. Where do you live?"

"Got no home," replied the boy busily engaged in allowing the dog to lick his hand.

"Where would you like to go, sonny?"

"Where yuh goin,' mister?"

The tall man shot a quick glance at the street urchin beside him. Something that he saw in the young eyes caused him to pause before replying very gravely.

"Probably to the undertaker."

"Yuh mean somebody's goin' to croak yuh?"

"Sooner or later. Now where shall I take you?"

"Make ut two fer de undertaker, mister. I'd go farder den dat fer de guy what done what yuh done fer me dog."

As the long California Limited backed into the station a tall man and a small boy were first to pass through the gates and approach the rear car, the observation platform of which shone with polished brass. The man swung along in an indolent way but the boy, with a limping yellow dog on a new leash, walked as if something were seriously the matter with him. Another boy would have spotted it at once. He was dressed from head to foot in new clothes and, except that his face was still a little dirty and his hair needed cutting, he might have stepped out of a bandbox. The sudden transformation was enough to make any boy walk on eggs.

At the forward end of the rear car the man set down two suit-cases and showed his tickets to the porter.

"Yes sah!" said the porter. "Dog goes to the baggage cah, sah."

"Ah, yes," returned the man. "Jimmie, wait till I put our suit-cases inside."

WAVING aside the assistance of the porter the man mounted the steps while the boy strolled back to the rear of the car and stood admiring the brass railing around the little platform. The man swiftly threw the suit-cases into Drawing-room A and walked back to the rear platform where the boy, after a quick glance toward the porter, handed up the dog. While the boy walked back along the outside of the car the man dropped the dog into the drawing-room and came out at the forward end once more.

"Put the dog in the baggage car?" called the man over the porter's head from the top step.

"Yep!" said the boy, pursing his lips for a whistle.

"Hop on, then," ordered the man.

The porter stared in surprise at the magical disappearance of the dog, but another passenger took his attention and man and boy passed inside.

In Drawing-room A, the tall man opened his suit-case and rapidly spread some of his things about the place.

"By the way," he said to his small companion, "I did that with the dog to see how you would obey orders and to teach you how things can be done with a little planning and a little daring."

"Mister, yuh got 'em all skinned!" exclaimed the boy.

"And you may call me Mr. Smith," added the man.

"Yes, sir," said the boy. "Will yuh tell me something?"

"What is it, Jimmie?"

"Are yuh a crook er a bull?"

"Make any difference?"

"Nope! Dere's bad ones and good ones in both lines."

"Quick!" exclaimed Smith as voices sounded outside their door. "Put Lemon in the washroom."

"Where is it?" whispered Jimmie, looking wildly around.

Smith jerked at the door leading off the drawing-room. It was locked. With the rapidity of lightning he pulled out a bunch of keys, selected one and expertly opened the door through which Jimmie shoved the dog.

"Gee! I didn't know dat place was there," gasped the boy.

The next minute the drawing-room opened and a red cap started to enter with some hand-baggage. He stopped upon seeing that the room was occupied.

"Must be some mistake, sir," he said over his shoulder. "This place is taken."

A man shouldered his way into the little room and looked down at Smith, who was sprawling in his seat. He was a big man and his head nearly touched the top of the door-way. His blue eyes, too light in color, looked as though they had never contained mirth and his chin was of that dogged type which indicates that, right or wrong, the owner is accustomed to getting what he wants.

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If you don't like Jimmy and his dog Lemon — and don't envy them and their adventure— there's something wrong.

The old jeweler's face turned a deep red and his jaw fell.

He was just in time to see a frail, old man slipping into his pajama coat.

"This is my room," he said with aggressive assurance. "My boy will move your things out."

"You might tell your troubles to the porter," suggested Smith.

"I might also pick you up and drop you out in the corridor," the big man snapped.

"Uh-huh," said Smith. "In the meantime you had better see the porter."

The man took one step forward but thought better of it and left abruptly. The train had scarcely started, however, before he returned with the porter, who asked to see Smith's tickets.

"This drawing-room has been sold twice, sah," he said to Smith. "The other passenger bought his first and you'll have to move sah. Sorry, sah."

"Then you will have to throw me out," returned Smith with a smile.

"We will do that—quick!" broke in the big man with the pale eyes as he pushed into the drawing-room beside the porter.

Smith slowly stood up and removed his coat. He had scarcely removed it when Jimmie landed his small fist in the middle of the porter's stomach.

"Yuh take de big guy," he shouted, "and I'll take de coon."

IT is said that the hand may be quicker than the eye. Certain it is that no single pair of eyes saw all that happened during the next few seconds. With one hand Smith once more lifted the small boy by the back of the coat collar, dropping him upon the seat in the rear. With the other hand he tucked a twenty dollar bill into the porter's tightly buttoned uniform and that was the only thing which that individual fully understood. At the same instant Smith crooked a foot behind the ankles of the big passenger, who was slightly in the rear of the porter. A slight push on the chest of the porter started the two intruders into a backward motion and, their feet being restrained by the position of Smith's leg, they toppled backwards into a heap in the corridor. Nor was that all. As the big passenger threw out a hand to save himself Smith, with conjuring speed, picked a slip of purple paper from the clutching fingers.

With the door closed and locked Smith set fire to the bit of purple paper and dropped it into the cuspidor where it was totally consumed. So ended all serious dispute over the ownership of Drawing-room A, Car 46. The big passenger never knew how his reservation ticket had disappeared, although he thought that he had dropped it in falling and he suspected the porter of finding it and selling it to Smith. Of course he, appealed to the conductor but there was nothing to be done. There was only one ticket and it belonged to Smith. Chicago had been left behind and the long journey had commenced.

Jimmie was a sad boy during some fifty miles out of Chicago. He was severely lectured for having lost his wits and struck the porter. After that, Lemon was let out of the washroom and Jimmie was sent in with orders to wash his face, ears and neck at least three times. When he came out Lemon was gone.

"Baggage car," said Smith. "Porter took him down. It's our next move and now it's your turn to do something. Go forward through the train till you reach the baggage car. Find your dog and ask if he's all right. Keep your eyes open and tell me what you see."

It was in the dining-car that Smith stopped Jimmie on his way back from the visit to his dog. The boy sat down opposite to his tall master at a little table for two. The shaded candle and the array of silver were like fairy-land to him and the flying blackness of the night on the other side of the window thrilled his soul with a mysterious romance. He sat very still and hesitated to eat.

"What's the matter?" asked Smith.

"Fer a guy wid no fadder an' no mudder—an nuttin but a yeller purp I tink I'm goin' bluey!"

Tears were suspiciously near the surface and his voice shook.

"What did you see in the baggage car?" asked Smith.

"Two guys was wearin' guns and dere was anudder purp like Lemon, only it was white."

"Nice dog?"

"Yep, an' who d'ye tink dat purp b'longs tuh?"

"Who?"

"Keegan! Dat's de big sausage dat yuh pushed over wid yer little finger."

A man had risen from another table and was passing out as Jimmie spoke. He stopped for a moment and glared down at Smith and the boy. It was the big passenger of their earlier acquaintance, the man whom Jimmie had called Keegan and described, very loudly, as a sausage.

Such hatred shone from Keegan's pale eyes that Smith dropped a hand below the table-cloth and eased his chair back a little. It was almost as if the furious man would be unable to restrain himself. He passed out, however, without a word but the carriage of his powerful shoulders boded ill for the man who had thwarted him.

"Gee!" murmured Jimmie, hanging his head. "I s'pose de big stiff heard me. I can't open me face widdout spoilin' de air."

"Never mind," said Smith. "Now run back to our room and get my cigarette case. And Jimmie!"

"Yes, sir."

"Keep your eyes open."

A LOOK of understanding was in the boy's eyes as he darted away upon his errand. In five minutes he returned, limping very badly and with a strained face.

"I goes tuh our room," said the boy, placing the cigarette-case on the table, "an' dere's Keegan, readin' a letter yuh left on de seat. I makes a grab at de letter an' he steps on me foot wid his heel. Fer a minute I don't know nuttin an' he's gone an' I comes back wid de coffin-nails. Dat man's so crool he'd slip his granmudder intuh a ticket chopper." (*Continued on page 27*)

It seemed he had dropped from the sky.

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GOOD PAPER

(Continued from page 6)

coming continued: "An' I ask him why not send 'em all at once and save trouble, but he says take what I can get for nothing, an' then he made me promise not to tell anybody about it, so I promised. And now you make me break my sacred word of honor."

She finished and sat silent under Goddard's stare. She did not give the impression of one who was lying, but he found it difficult to accredit the fantastic story. Still, nothing was to be gained by antagonizing her. He drew out his watch, noted the time and decided it would be well to be rid of her before the mysterious customer came. So his manner was milder when he spoke.

"Well, well," he remarked kindly, "so that's how it was?"

"Yes, sir; just like I told you. Was there anything wrong?"

"I believe not; we just wondered how large a library you have for sale."

"Oh, I sell 'em as fast as they come," she assured him. "An' do you want the others, if I get any more?"

"Yes; bring them in," replied Brunen, "I'll give you as much as anyone for them."

GODDARD reached into his pocket for a bill, and by way of dismissing her, rolled and pressed it in her hand.

"We're on your side, Mattie," he reassured her. She glanced at the bill, patted his hand with her mottled paw and went out smiling. Goddard took up the desk telephone and presently had a subordinate at his bank on the wire.

"Find out for me," he instructed, "who Francis Guthrie is, I'll hold the wire."

Presently he had the information and hung up the receiver and turned to his friend.

"The man whose name is in our book," he said, "is a woolen manufacturer, well rated financially. We'll bear that in mind and await developments. The next step is the arrival of the purchaser. Suppose we determine when he arrives how badly he wants the book. Ask him ten dollars for it."

"It's like robbery," demurred Brunen. "But if you say so, I'll do it."

An hour passed in which Brunen attended the wants of two or three persons. They were alone again and had examined the book for the twentieth time when their man came in. Brunen hastily placed the book between two others on a shelf and advanced to meet the stranger. Repetition had taught the customer to perform his role perfectly. In the manner of a man who enjoys browsing among books, he lingered before a shelf.

"Anything in particular?" inquired Brunen.

"Perhaps," answered the stranger. "For some time I've been looking for a technical work—The Pennsylvania Coal Fields, by Professor Edgar Curtis. I don't suppose you'd have it here."

"It's quite possible I have. You said by Curtis. Now that I think of it, I got that in recently. Back here."

The man followed Brunen to the shelf where Goddard stood, his attention apparently focused on an open volume in his hands. As the two came toward him the banker made mental note of the customer: dark clothes, badly out of shape and hanging loosely on a thin, emaciated body, the bloodless face of a consumptive, the too-bright eyes that roved restlessly. Brunen reached for Professor Curtis's work and handed it to the man, who inspected it eagerly, despite his previous nonchalance, and Goddard noticed he looked for the name on the inside of the front cover, then turned the pages and stopped, Goddard knew, at Page 104.

"What is the price?" he asked.

Brunen hesitated. He possessed none of the qualities of the salesman, and hesitated to ask the exorbitant sum agreed upon previously, but a quick, significant glance from Goddard gave him courage.

"Ten dollars," he said calmly, adding fatuously, "It's the only copy I have."

The quibbling which has been known to accompany the sale of an article in an establishment dealing in second hand wares did not follow. Brunen was bewildered when the customer, without a word, drew forth a ten-dollar bill, received his purchase and walked out.

"Well!" exclaimed the book merchant, staring at the bill.

"He wanted it badly enough," remarked Goddard. "It's worth at least ten dollars to him and it's up to us to learn why."

A MONTH passed in which time Ely Goddard, engrossed in the affairs of his bank, dismissed from his immediate attention the incident of the books. However, he had not forgotten it, and in idle moments he found it an absorbing if elusive puzzle. Now and then he found himself mulling over the question of who profited from such a transaction. Soon after that day in Brunen's shop he had written to Francis Guthrie, the woolen manufacturer, staing that, as a collector, he sought a copy of Curtis's The Pennsylvania Coal Mines, which he had been informed, he said, was owned by Mr. Guthrie. A courteous reply from Mr. Guthrie bore the information that he had never owned a book so entitled, and Goddard regretted having written him. If Guthrie were involved in the affair of the books the writing of the letter probably had been a high act of indiscretion.

Brunen had been requested to communicate with Goddard if Mattie returned with another of the strangely marked volumes.

Another week had gone by when one morning the banker received a telephone message from Brunen. The thing had happened again, exactly as before. Old Mattie had come with her book and received her dollar. Over the wire Brunen was giving the name written in the front cover.

"William B. Morehead!" exclaimed Goddard. "I know him. He's one of our depositors. Send it over, will you, Brunen? No . . . wait. I'll have one of our messengers come for it. . . . Yes. Right away."

Here was an opportuhity to go to the bottom of the mystery, Goddard believed, but he hesitated before communicating with Morehead, a manufacturing jeweler and an honored depositor of the bank. Obviously, if Morehead knew the facts in the case he would resent meddling. Then, Goddard remembered, Morehead frequently borrowed large sums from the Cooper's National; that even now the bank held his note for a considerable amount. Goddard decided. He instructed his secretary to call Mr. Morehead and ask him to step over to the bank. While he waited the messenger returned from Brunen's shop with the book.

Goddard hastily stripped off the paper in which it had been wrapped and turned back the front cover. Morehead's name was written there. The banker peered closer and a sharp exclamation escaped him. He took up a reading glass and studied the name. It was Morehead's signature, no doubt of that. He had seen the carefully written combination of letters too often to be mistaken. He turned rapidly to page 104 and in the top margin saw the Code figures 95 % C.

As he puzzled over them the secretary announced Mr. Morehead.

Goddard felt himself on the eve of an interesting perhaps an important discovery. But he had no intention of cross-examining his visitor as he had done Old Mattie. Interest in the mystery had not overbalanced his judgment, and reticence to trespass in a private affair would have restricted him, if the character of the individual with whom he dealt had not done so. If the explanation were to reveal Morehead in an unfavorable position, there was no advantage in rushing in blindly. If the affair unfoldedd itself as only a harmless whimsy in which practical men occassionally indulge, third degree methods would place Goddard in a hideous light. So he summoned all his diplomacy as he greeted his depositor, a full-blooded, handsome man—too handsome and too well-dressed, thought Goddard.

"Sit over here, Mr. Morehead. Cigars in that box."

Goddard beamed a wide smile, as if undecided, and then offered, "Let me give you a drink." Without waiting for a word of acceptance, he walked to the handsome bookcase, unlocked the glass door, opened it and groped behind a row of books. Presently he withdrew a slender, high shouldered bottle bearing a label with five stars. His hand went into the recess again and came out with two small glasses. Into each glass he poured a generous drink, regarding the brandy and then Morehead with the same humorous expression. His manner was light, very light, one might almost say airy, if that term could be applied to one of Goddard's poundage. Morehead was frankly amazed. Few men, he knew, were invited into this office in the morning of a business day and asked to drink with the vice-president.

"What have I done to deserve all this?" asked Morehead, returning his host's grin and taking the glass.

"It's my little way for apologizing for calling a busy man away from his office to satisfy what I might call a conceit of mine."

Goddard replaced the bottle in its hiding place, turned and asked abruptly: "Mr. Morehead, do you read a great deal?"

"Well I confess a bank book is my favorite literature."

"Candid, I'm sure," returned Goddard heartily, 'but seriously, you have a library, I presume."

"Oh, I suppose you'd call it that. I have a few books."

Goddard plunged.

"Did you ever own a work called The Latin Republics?"

"No; I believe not."

GODDARD held up the book and asked, "You're certain you never owned this?"

"Positive," declared Morehead staring at it.

The banker came forward. He had flipped back the cover, so when he handed the book to Morehead the signature was directly before the latter's eyes.

"Good God!"

The exclamation burst from Morehead's lips. He gazed again at the signature and then rose to his feet.

"Where did you get this?" he demanded.

Goddard watched his man carefully. He had not anticipated this.

"I called you to tell you that. Think; are you sure you never owned this book?"

"Of course I'm sure. I haven't written my name in a book since I was a schoolboy."

"And this was published last year."

"My signature!"

Morehead's signature. The key to his wealth, seal of his good name, stamp of his promise. His surprise became fear.

"My signature, and not written by me. A forgery!"

"Sit down," said Goddard soothingly; and quietly related the incidents of the affair as they had come to him. As he told the story his manner varied inversely to the state of mind of his visitor. Morehead's agitation was growing. Vaguely he sensed a plot to ruin him. He had heard of such cases.

"Now turn to Page 104" Goddard was saying, "and see what you can make of the figures at the top of the page."

Morehead fumbled rapidly through the book and stared with frightened eyes at the mysterious code symbols. The sight of them and their hidden import added to his dread. The fear of some unknown enemy unnerved him. The book dropped from his hands to the table, the cover bent back and disclosing the signature so like Morehead's but which he would swear his hand had not written.

Morehead stared until the letters seemed to run together grotesquely, then reached for the drink which he had forgotten. His fingers, gripping the glass trembled perceptibly. As he lifted the brandy to his lips, his hand fluttered so the liquid slopped over and a great drop streaked down the side of the glass and splashed on the open book.

"Careful!" cautioned the banker leaning forward to see if the signature had been blotted. The drop of brandy had fallen an inch above Morehead's name and gradually was being absorbed by the pores of the heavy paper. As it spread slowly into

(Continued on page 24)

"CROOKED LANE"

by

Hamilton Craigie

A gripping police adventure

in two parts

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The lock had been neatly jimmied—ripped ruthlessly from the tin covering of the so-called fireproof door, where it now dangled disconsolately from a single screw which held it in place.

Midnight Dollars

BY C. S. MONTANYE

Go on with this amazing story from here—Rankin Trant returns to "mad Manhattan" and finds a "blonde" hairpin and mysterious satchel in his apartment. The satchel was stuffed with currency. A blonde girl comes for it—detectives arrive — the satchel disappears.

THE following morning Trant awoke to a day of dubious aspect. The promise of a reluctant storm to end the heat wave made the heavens lowering and hid the face of the August sun. As he tubbed and performed shaving rites, the events of last night came tumbling back into memory. Now they seemed incomprehensible, more dream-like than ever. Could it all really have happened? Had the girl really been there, youthful and bewitching, and had he, himself, really fought in the blank darkness with this rogue who was wanted by the police and who, in all probability, had in some way discovered the hiding-place of the money-packed satchel and had made off with it?

As last night, the puzzle was too intricate to hope to fathom.

At nine he breakfasted at The Sign of the Stag on Lexington Avenue, a paper open before him which, as he glanced through it, proved to contain nothing concerning either Sanford or a police report on the escapade of last night. He turned to the society items, curious to learn if they contained any reference to the home-coming of Grantley Page and found none.

A branch of the family was briefly mentioned in a short account that had to do with Barry Grantley's immediate family. It appeared that his mother, Mrs. Davis Grantley, and his sister, Miss Rosalie, were occupying Five Acres, the family residence at Birchwood, in the County of Westchester. Trant's thoughts mechanically reverted to the apartment over his own suite—to the previous evening and the silence that had reigned overhead.

At ten o'clock he wandered gloomily into the office on Thirty-fourth street where he maintained desk room and began to consider the problem of reading mail that had accumulated for the period of six weeks. It was impossible to concentrate on the task confronting him. His thoughts were still ensnared by the intrigue of the mystery-drama into which he had been precipitated headlong. He could not free himself from the recollection of the girl, the packages of bank-notes that had been crammed into the little satchel—the vanishing of that piece of luggage itself.

Toward one o'clock Trant tossed the unopened mail that remained into the bottom drawer of his desk, picked up his panama and told the young woman who had charge of the switchboard that he didn't believe he would be back until the next morning.

Formidable though the afternoon was with its storm threatening, the great shopping artery of

(*Continued on page 28*)

The room revealed in the dawn of the center chandelier was a cyclone of disorder.

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IT IS THE L

Haley, from Scotland Yard, scans Stillwell's finger-prints in the hope that he may identify him as a burglar wanted by the English police

Justin, in the presence of Ruth and her uncle, the governor of the state, refuses to accept a pardon until he can prove that he did not murder Woodruff

Two
The Gov

"It Is the Law" suitors for the han of the Governor of certain evening on w tion. One suitor, stage, discovers that another is accepted down. The whole suitor's vengeful plot of mistaken identit groom arrested for moon. For eight vile scheme lar but, we canno away. The Rice of "On T structed an lovers of m is running a

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AW

A REVIEW by P.L. ATKINSON

The day before the wedding, Justin and Ruth, accompanied by Billy Elliott and Ruth's sister, call on Woodruff to endeavor to effect a reconciliation

Girls, Three Suitors, ernor, and a Murdered Man

is a melodrama in which three d of a charming girl (the niece he State, by the way) appoint a nich to ask her the fateful ques- efore his courtship reaches that he loves the girl's younger sister; nd, of course, the third is turned lay is based on the disappointed ing. He skillfully rigs up a case y and manages to get the bride- murder on the eve of his honey- years the unhappy victim of the guishes in Sing Sing and is or will not give the plot ay was written by Elmer rial" fame, and he has con- vening's entertainment that ystery will appreciate. It the Ritz Theater in New York City.

Justin and his beautiful young bride arrive at Woodruff's apartment to find their friend shot through the heart—lying dead on the floor

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Hot

by CHARLES MAGEE ADAMS

His gray eyes bright, he climbed upon a table and marked this circle.

GENE ROBERTS pulled back his coat and ran his hand absently into his right trousers pocket, only to draw it out with a jerk while a sudden look of comical astonishment overspread his compact young face.

The movement had been a reflex. Standing in Dr. Blansford's office near half-past five of a winter afternoon, he had been aware of a sensation of heat in the vicinity of this pocket and put in his hand all but unconsciously to determine the cause. But the second movement too was a reflex, for the keys, the half dozen desk, padlock, and door keys in that pocket, were hot, so hot that his fingers recoiled involuntarily at the touch of them.

He looked about sharply while he ran his hand in again, more gingerly. There was no source of heat in sight. Beside him, a foot or two away, stood the adjustable steel chair in which Dr. Blansford, a throat specialist, treated his patients, pushed a little out of its usual position now, and in front of it, a stand carrying the lamp used in this work, now burning. To be sure, six or seven feet away across the little room, was a steam radiator, but he was certain that was not hot, not as hot as his keys, for they were growing hotter in his hand every moment.

He put the keys back into his pocket, shifted uncomfortably, shook them away from his thigh, and turned to his uncle, just as the older man stooped into a corner beyond the chair. "Here it is," he said, "must have laid it on the window sill when I helped carry him out and then knocked it off." He straightened with a brier pipe.

Gene did not answer. Was his imagination playing him tricks? Those keys could not be hot. He watched his uncle intently for a sign of any similar experience as the other put the recovered pipe between his teeth and reached into his trousers pocket for a match. Gene heard distinctly the clink of metal, but no surprise or perplexity was revealed in the lean face. Yet in his own pocket the keys were so stingingly realistically hot that he shrank from the touch of them against his thigh.

Mark Roberts faced the door. "Turn out that light, will you," he requested, as he went into the room beyond.

Gene switched off the lamp on the stand his uncle had lighted on coming in, and followed. In the larger room, he knew, he would find the figure of Jim Curtis in prison gray, wiry even when motionless, lying on a couch. That was why he had been so ready to help his uncle hunt for the lost pipe, and Jim was still lying there as he re-entered. But Ruth Curtis, white and desperately deft a few minutes before, was simply standing looking down at the gray-clad figure, and Dr. Blansford had straightened and was talking to Mark.

"You know, warden," he was saying, in his precise professional manner, "His heart has been affected, and failure could have been anticipated at almost any time."

Gene heard his uncle answer, heard the stooped little doctor with the pale scholarly face go on with his explanation, saw the dry pain in the black eyes of the girl in nurse's uniform, and even caught the upjutting thrust of Jim Curtis's indomitable chin. But the fact that blurred all these into the background was that of the hot keys in his pocket.

They were cooling a little. He could endure them against his thigh now and even touch them briefly. But they were still hot, unmistakably hot. But how? Why?

Gene was not idly inquisitive. No electrical engineer, particularly of but twenty-five, could have had much idle curiosity in his makeup and been considered worth sending out on one of the Western Welding Machine Company's biggest installation jobs. It was because he was an engineer, accustomed to asking and answering logically why and how that this baffled him; that, and because of a sparkle of imagination in his alert brown eyes.

He walked back to the door and scanned the inner office with a frown. It was a plain little room, containing an instrument case, a chair and table in addition to the treatment chair and its lamp stand, all of the usual sort; no apparent source of heat save the steam radiator. Gene's frown deepened.

He could handle his keys now, though not comfortably, and he drew them out and looked at them. No visible change had come over them. Yet they were hot. But how? Why?

A NEWCOMER entered the outer room, a man from the coroner's office, he saw. Mark Roberts answered questions and then turned to his nephew. "There doesn't seem to be anything more we can do here, Gene," he said. "We may as well be going."

Gene assented and they went out into the hall and downstairs, the old office building having no elevators. On the floor below where Gene had found temporary office space in a room directly beneath Dr. Blansford's suite, Gene stopped a moment to finish a detail interrupted a half hour before when his uncle had summoned him hurriedly upstairs to help with the first aid that had been in vain.

"I still can't quite realize that old Jim's actually dead," Mark said as he rejoined him. "He hated death so, I never thought of its getting him. But Jim was a good hater."

Why were those keys hot? Nothing else was. Gene reached into his left pocket. The few coins and the penknife there were normal. "He's been sick, hadn't he?" he suggested, to hold up the conversation.

Mark nodded. "Throat trouble. I've been bringing him to Dr. Blansford for more than a year. We have no facilities for that sort of treatment at our hospital. He was getting weaker right along too, but when he got in that chair this afternoon I never dreamed he'd be dead in five minutes. He hated death that much, and hate'll keep a man alive when medicine won't, you know, Gene."

They reached the street, stepped into the warden's car, and were heading away through the thickening winter darkness. "He looked it," Gene remarked. There was no reason for those keys to be hot, absolutely none.

"Yes, Jim spent most of his life hating," Mark said reflectively. "He went crooked his first time because he hated being poor so much that he stole,

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Keys

Everyone carries keys! The bunch in the pocket of the warden's nephew were just plain keys — but, Read it!

They were getting hotter in his hand every moment.

and hating was what made him kill Sammie Blair, the thing he got life for. He'd have gone to the chair for it if Sammie's boy, Milt, hadn't put in a plea for him with the pardon board. Jim never had a really fair chance in his life. Milt saw that. It was mighty white of him. But Jim repaid him by hating him worse than he'd hated Sammie and when Milt and Jim's Ruth fell in love, wouldn't hear to their being married, though I suppose they will, now that Jim's gone. It's a shame for a man to waste his life like that, isn't it?"

Gene grasped what his uncle said, but the thing that kept hammering insistently at his attention was the fact of those hot keys. During the ride across the city to the drab bulk of the prison, during the excellent dinner in the warden's quarters Grace Roberts managed somehow to keep home-like, and during the pleasant evening before the living-room fire, he kept turning this question round and round uneasily, and when at length he reached the room he occupied in a quiet bachelor's hotel, he got into a bathrobe, sat down at his table, and set himself deliberately to satisfy these questions with a logical explanation, for explanation there must be if he was to sleep tonight. He remembered too keenly wakeful hours he had spent over knotty calculus problems back in his university days and more such over tangles in design.

The cause was there. He had simply overlooked it. Slowly, with keen, trained concentration, he began to visualize the scene at the moment he had noticed this curious heating; the adjustable steel chair beside him, his uncle beyond, peering into the corner, the window, the instrument case, all with that strange clearness even greater than at the actual moment of perception. He could see every detail, the lamp stand, and the——

He sat up with elated abruptness. Of course! He remembered distinctly that his uncle had turned on the lamp when they came in to aid them in locating the misplaced pipe, and that he himself had turned it off when they left. But what had not struck him before and what he saw clearly now, in his reconstructed picture, was the color of the light, not the usual glaring white—instead a queer, clear brilliance focused in a single powerful beam.

He heaved a sigh of relief and got into bed. He knew something of light, that any of a dozen known or half-known rays could do tricks far stranger than heating keys in a man's pocket, and this light had been just over his right shoulder as he stood beside the adjustable steel chair. He went to sleep promptly, and early the next morning walked into Dr. Blansford office, confidently ready to have the lingering shreds of his perplexity dispelled.

DR. BLANSFORD was in his waiting room consulting an appointment book, only a somberness about his pale scholarly features and the fact that Ruth Curtis was absent suggesting that anything beyond the usual routine had taken place the afternoon before.

"I owe you all sorts of apologies, doctor, for taking your time," Gene began, after easily establishing his identity. "But yesterday while I was helping uncle Mark hunt for his pipe a little while after Mr. Curtis died, I noticed the lamp by your treatment chair gave a peculiar light I had never seen before, and I came in to ask about it. If I'm impertinent, please say so. But I've always been interested in anything unusual scientifically, and this light attracted my attention."

The throat specialist smiled slightly, large blue eyes on the younger man with a habitual intentness almost diagnostical. "You need not apologize," he said, cordially but precisely. "On the contrary, your interest is altogether commendable because it is so rare in these times. I would be only happy to explain everything I could about this lamp and gladly would have kept it here had I known you were interested. But I returned it not more than a quarter of an hour ago to Mr. Blair."

Mr. Blair?" Gene realized too late that there was something more than surprise in his exclamation. But Dr. Blansford nodded with only his usual precision.

"Mr. Milton Blair, the Blair Scientific Equipment Co.," he explained.

"Oh, of course." Gene's tone was normal again, but a new sobering thrill had run over him.

"He has been developing this lamp for some time," the doctor went on, "With the aim, I believe, of finding a light that will give true color values for examination work. He asked me some weeks ago if I would test it for him. I consented, and late yesterday afternoon he brought the lamp in but left when he heard that Mr. Curtis was coming. I used the lamp on Mr. Curtis but found it not what I had expected, and so sent it back this morning. But Mr. Blair will no doubt gladly give you all the information you want about the lamp and its light."

Gene thanked the stooped little specialist, apologized for taking his time, and went out. But on the way to his office, on the floor below, and all during that morning while he directed the installation of Western welders in a factory across the city, he kept turning round and round the fact of those hot keys with a persistent significance that made that new soberness grow steadily upon him.

At noon he spent half his lunch time in the public library, skimming through heavy volumes on the ramified phases of light, but finding material that only increased that insistent soberness, and that afternoon an hour before quitting time, he left the factory and went to the Blair Scientific Equipment Co.

The plant was not large, he found, and visibly shabby. Blair, in a soiled laboratory apron, proved to be a young man of about his own age, somewhat round-shouldered, with a face all but boyish in its openness, and big blue eyes shadowed now.

"If I'm prying into something that's none of my business, just say so," Gene said, after introducing himself and finding a seat in a disorderly room half office, half workshop, "But I happened to be in Dr. Blansford's yesterday afternoon a short time after Mr. Curtis died." That shadow deepened over Blair's face. "And my attention was attracted

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by the peculiar light of a lamp Dr. Blansford said you had developed. It interested me as a scientific novelty."

Blair brightened with quick enthusiasm that all but dispelled that shadow. "You're not prying at all," he assured the engineer. "I'm only too glad to find someone who's interested. Just a minute."

He rose, turned to a table at the opposite side of the room, and came back with a spheroidal metal shell fitted with connection studs at one end. "This is the sample you saw," he said, handing it to Gene. Then, seating himself again, "There has been a demand, particularly in nose and throat examination, for a lamp that would give good intensity and true color values. So I decided to add one to our line, and began experimental work more than a year ago, the problem proving to be largely one of filtering out the undesirable rays and filtering in those we needed."

Gene had been examining the lamp keenly. Midway along one side was a circular opening some two or three inches in diameter, and through this he saw that inside was an electric bulb of the gas-filled stereopticon type. But now, as Blair mentioned filtration, he looked up, a question in his eyes.

BLAIR caught the look. "I took the filter off," he explained, reaching over and tapping the circular opening. "Dr. Blansford found certain undesirable characteristics yesterday, so I have been making changes in the filter and focusing lense today and expect to have them finished in time for him to give it another test tomorrow or the next day. I'm sorry the filter's not in shape so I can show it to you, but if you can come to Dr. Blansford's for the next test, I shall be very much pleased to have you."

Gene nodded. "I'd be glad to," he replied. "As I said, the peculiar color of the light attracted my attention and made me curious enough to come here and ask about it."

They talked a few moments more, but when Gene left and went downtown to his room, that uneasy soberness had been replaced by a disturbing gravity and that evening, after dining and sitting about in a restless sort of preoccupation, he went out to his uncle's quarters at the prison, urged on by a half formed reluctant question.

Mark was in a speculative mood. "Strange you never can be just sure what a man's going to do, isn't it?" he suggested over a comfortable cigar. "After I told you how old Jim Curtis hated young Blair you'd think he'd do everything he could to keep him from marrying Ruth after he died, wouldn't you? But he hasn't. I opened his will this morning and it just leaves what little he had to her without a word against the boy."

Gene's eyebrows contracted. "Why open his will today?" he asked. "The funeral isn't until tomorrow."

"Jim's instructions," Mark replied. "He knew this throat trouble would get him and he left a package of papers with me six months ago marked 'To be opened the morning after my death.' So I opened them this morning and there was a will, a letter to Dr. Blansford, and another envelope." He frowned. "But there may be something in that. Here."

He rose, crossed to a small writing desk, and returned with an envelope which he handed to his nephew.

Gene scrutinized it carefully. It was long and white, thick with contents, and in sharp black characters across its face, the direction, "Open tomorrow morning." Gene ran his fingers over it. "I think you'll find another envelope inside this," he suggested, as he handed it back.

Mark's brows went up. "You think so?" He reflected. "Then maybe Jim just hasn't started on the boy. That's more like him."

Gene leaned forward, that disturbing reluctant question that had brought him here framing itself. But he hesitated, shrank from asking, and instead rose to go. "I wish you'd telephone me what you find when you open it," he said. "Old Jim's quite an interesting character."

The telephone rang almost immediately after he had reached his office the next morning, but the voice in the receiver was not his uncle's. "This is Milton Blair," it said, and Gene recognized the boyish tones of the young instrument manufacturer. "I called to tell you I've arranged with Dr. Blansford to test that new lamp that attracted your attention tomorrow afternoon at 5 o'clock. I'll be glad to have you come up and see the tests if you have time."

"Thanks for remembering me," Gene responded. "I'll try to if I possibly can," and he hung up, but frowning with a half impatient annoyance not even relieved by a telephone call from his uncle a half hour later.

"You're right, Gene," Mark reported, excitement betrayed in his usually calm voice. "There was another envelope and it's marked 'Open tomorrow night.' There was another letter for Dr. Blansford too. What do you make of all this?"

"Why?" Gene countered, that disturbing question half daring to express itself.

"Oh, I just wondered if maybe—" Mark stopped, leaving anything to be inferred.

"Well I won't have much time to wonder today," Gene answered.

Can You Guess The End of "Hot Keys" now?

HE was irritated. Since the moment it had been startled into activity by the sudden fact of those hot keys, that imaginative strand in his makeup had been steadily weaving a shadowy something across the background of his consciousness; nothing definite, nothing he put in clearly stated words even to himself; simply a web, part suggestion, part truth, part supposition, that held his attention fearfully yet irresistibly. But of all that intricate and seemingly well-knit fabric, the only thread which could hold even its own weight was the fact of those hot keys.

He saw that now. Scrutinized with cool-headed logic, that vague shadow collapsed in drooping shreds, and impatient, annoyed, and just a little piqued, he disposed abruptly of the routine at his office headquarters and went out to the factory where the welders were being installed, to direct, check, and advise the men centering their efforts on getting one unit of the welders into condition for a preliminary trial that day.

These welders were of the induction type, designed to receive certain metal parts at one stage of the manufacturing process, clamp them automatically between contact jaws, and bring them together, the weld being made at the moment of contact.

All that morning and that afternoon Gene worked, but the fact of those hot keys clung. He could remember the sting of them against his thigh, their burn on his finger tips. Why had they been hot? That peculiar light; Milton; Ruth; Jim Curtis—He suppressed this sternly and centered his attention on his work, but that persistent fact kept prodding nudging at him.

Finally, just before quitting time, the last adjustment was made, the last connection tightened, and the unit pronounced ready for trial. Parts were secured, fed in, and, with the workmen standing by watching intently, the current was turned on. The mechanism started smoothly. The two parts slid into the receiving jaws, the jaws closed, swung together, and, with a whitening flash, the first quick weld was made.

Gene watched, even more intent than the workmen, and as he watched, his guard relaxed for the moment, that persistent fact tapped at him again and this time with something else, something that stopped him short in an order for a slight adjustment and held him staring fixedly.

Ten, twenty, thirty seconds he stood, eyes wide, body motionless, then abruptly resumed work. But an hour later when he left the factory, the welding unit made fit for service, he did not go to his room, but instead hurried down town, every movement marked by an odd subdued eagerness.

It was dark when he reached the old building where his office was located, and the tenants gone

(*Concluded on page 24*)

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A two part Story — Conclusion by

THOMAS. L MASSON

With the speed of light he snapped the handcuffs on my wrist.

Burnt Almonds

JIM HERRICK engages, on a wager with a detective friend, Tomlinson, to solve a baffling murder mystery within twenty-four hours. He has a theory—fancying himself the slayer of a wealthy old lady. Now he is on the trail of Perry, whose card and box of candy is in the house. Miss Slade, niece of the dead woman, has been acting suspiciously.

Now try and guess it!

"AND this came on Monday with a box of candy. What do you know about that?"

"Perry reached for the card and went over it rather elaborately.

"I left this card here several months ago," he said at last. "I put it in the tray downstairs. There were a lot of others there."

"Why did you do that?"

"It's customary, isn't it, when you call? The tray was there, and I just dropped it."

"How can you prove that?"

Perry came over to where I stood and showed me the card.

"Because," he said, "when I came to call I looked in my case and there was only one card left—I don't use them very often, you know—and this particular card had a pencil mark on the back. I took out my eraser and rubbed it out. Look! You can see where I did it."

I borrowed Tomlinson's glass.

"Yes," I said, "I see the mark and where it has been erased. What does that prove?" I asked coolly.

Perry looked me straight in the eye. He wasn't afraid anyway.

"I see," he said at last, "I get you. You fellows are trying to fasten this thing on me. All right, gentlemen, go to it. But there's a chance that you can't do it, eh? I read in the papers that Miss Pollyton had a servant—a maid—who left the day before she died. Maybe that maid knows something—if she can be found."

"She is here. Mary!" Mary appeared.

"Mary, do you know this gentleman?"

"No, sir—never saw him before."

Perry took up the line of his defense.

"Mary," he said, "Have you ever seen this card before?"

"Yes, sur. There was a card like that on the tray downstairs."

"How do you know that?"

"I looked 'em over, sur—no harm in that."

"Quite natural, Mary."

"Higgins," said Tomlinson, "Would you mind getting that tray." Higgins returned with the card tray. There was a number of cards on it—some of them evidently of quite an ancient lineage—business cards mostly. Mr. Perry's card was not among them.

"Very well," I continued, "so far, so good. Now what was your object in calling on Miss Pollyton?"

"I came to ask her if I could marry her niece—that is, this lady here."

"And what did she say?"

"She said that was my affair."

"Did she say anything else?"

"Yes."

"What was it?"

"She said if it was her money I was after, that I wouldn't get a red cent of it."

"But she left all of her money to her niece."

Perry smiled.

"But that was some time ago—last year—in February."

"Then she wasn't going to leave her money to her niece at that time?"

"No, sir. She said she had left the most of it to a Catholic orphan asylum—and a little of it for a home for dogs and cats. The rest of it she had tied up in a trust fund, and her niece was to get only a small income provided she didn't marry until she was thirty; and then she fired me—told me to get out—that no fortune-hunter was going to get the best of her."

"Did she tell you anything else about the will?"

"Yes, sir. She was a sharp woman. If she had been an ordinary woman she would have let it go at that, but she wanted, apparently to prove it to me. She had a copy of the will with her. She waved it at me—ran it over."

"Tell you what lawyers made it out?"

"Sure she did—Gray, Spader and Scott. I remember, because they are in Temple Court right around the corner from me—big firm."

"Did she say who had made out the will—I mean what member of the firm?"

"I don't remember that—maybe she did."

"Was it Gayne?"

"I don't recall."

"You are still in love with Miss Slade?"

"I certainly am."

"Then why didn't you marry her — in spite of the will?"

"Ask her."

"I refuse to answer," said Miss Slade, tossing her head.

I bowed and looked at my watch.

"Thank you, that is all."

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"Tomlinson, we have just got time before four to go down-town. Come on."

"Where are you going?"

"To find the murderer," I replied, "And we are now bound for Temple Court."

We arrived at the office of Gray, Spader and Scott thirty minutes later. Mr. Gray received us cordially.

"You are from the Stanley Agency," he said.

"I am," said Tomlinson, showing his badge, "and this is my friend, Mr. Herrick, who has been good enough to interest himself in the case with me. We were together in France."

"Well, gentlemen, I am glad to meet you," said Gray. "I rather expected you," he added. "Everything we have is at your disposal. I will turn you over to Mr. Gayne, who had charge of both wills. Quite a mysterious affair—but she was a very peculiar woman, with extensive interests, and evidently somebody wanted her money very badly."

"One moment, Mr. Gray," I said. "Before doing this I should like to ask some questions about Mr. Gayne. He is a bachelor, isn't he?"

"Yes."

"Lives with a sister in the suburbs. Quiet but social in his ways. Was a great favorite with Miss Pollyton."

"We have reason to believe that he had the confidence of Miss Pollyton," said Gray, his manner stiffening.

"He also knew Miss Slade and called on her quite frequently—was accustomed to taking her to the theatre occasionally."

Tomlinson, upon whom our conversation had up to that moment apparently made no impression, suddenly turned upon me.

"How did you know all this?" he asked. "I must say, Jim, you appear to know more than you've told me."

"That's easy," I said smiling. "I got it from a reporter friend of mine who's working up the case for his paper. When you sent for me yesterday, I ran across him and he gave me some interesting facts. Perry was calling on Miss Slade also, but he and Gayne never met. She managed that."

"I don't quite gather now, what you're driving at," said Mr. Gray. "If you are trying to drag Mr. Gayne into this affair, I can assure you gentlemen you are off the trail. He's been with us for five years and I know him through and through. But you'd better see and talk with him yourselves. Mr. Gayne!"

Gayne was a short young man, about twenty-eight, with a much pre-occupied face. He appeared to be thinking of something intently all the time. But his answers were clear and to the point.

"Yes," he said, "I made out both of those wills. The last one was made out six months ago. She reversed herself completely from the one formerly made. Insisted on tearing it up in my presence—to make sure."

"You know a great deal about her, don't you?" I asked.

"I ought to. I got up most of her papers, and saw a great deal of the old lady.

"She didn't take any dope, did she?"

Gayne considered.

"She may have," he replied. "In fact, I wouldn't be surprised if she did. She was very queer—hard to get along with. Never could tell how she would act." Tomlinson flashed his eyes at mine.

"But you got along with her pretty well?"

"Well, yes, I suppose so. Are you going to keep me long?" He looked at his watch.

"I'm sorry, Mr. Gayne, but I am afraid we've got to," I replied. "You see, this is a very important matter, and I've got to close it up before noon tomorrow."

"You mean?"

"I've got to get the guilty man—if there is one—before that hour."

Gayne looked at me fixedly.

"What's the hurry?" he asked.

At this moment a boy entered.

"Is Mr. Tomlinson here?" he asked. "Call for him over the 'phone."

"That's from Higgins," I said. "I told him if he couldn't get us at the house to try here." Tomlinson hurried out and returned in five minutes—which were not wasted—as I had the chance to ask Gayne a number of other questions—all of which he answered promptly and fully.

TOMLINSON came in breathless. I motioned him to keep quiet. "Write it," I whispered. He wrote on a slip and handed it to me.

"A—contains fully a grain of morphine."

'Igot up.

'You couldn't possibly spend the evening with us, could you?" I asked Gayne. "You see—as a lawyer you fully understand—that the slightest thing may be of the utmost importance in a case like this, and information comes slowly. I know you are willing——

"To give me all you have, but it takes a certain amount of leisure to get details. If you could dine with us——"

"I'm afraid it is impossible, gentlemen. I can give you tomorrow morning. But you see I live out of town, in the suburbs—and I've got an important engagement. In fact—got to clear up some papers before I catch my regular train."

"All right," I said. "Then there's only one thing to do."

"What's that?"

"We'll go along with you—no objection to that is there?"

"Well, I——"

"We'll leave you at your home."

Gayne hesitated.

"Well," he said hurriedly, "I'll be with you in a jiffy—if you will excuse me until I finish up my work." He hurried out into the main office.

"Look here, Jim," whispered Tomlinson puzzled, laying his hand on my arm. "What's your idea?"

"Didn't I tell you," I replied, "that vanity was at the bottom of this business? Why you can see it in this fellow's face—quiet, reserved, but sure of himself, and look at his clothes—unobtrusive, but correct to a detail. My friend the reporter made some interesting discoveries. Perry is in love with Miss Slade and she—well, actually, she is in love with him. But this chap Gayne came in, ingratiated himself with Miss Pollyton, and then, by making it appear to Miss Slade that he had gotten the will changed in her favor, laid her under an obligation. She kept him away from Perry by a sort of woman's intuition, and he was vain enough to believe that once the old lady was dead, he could marry the girl and get control of the money."

"But—if he didn't know about Perry——"

"He did—he ran across him once or twice, but he didn't look upon Perry as a formidable rival—only a rival he could use for his purpose—you see it all comes back to the chap's vanity—his inherent confidence in his power with women—especially when it was reinforced by Miss Slade's knowledge that it was through him that the will had been changed."

"And how are you going to prove it?"

"You follow me and wait and see."

Tomlinson slapped me on the back.

"By George!" he exclaimed. "You are a wonder." "I am glad I got you into this case, even if it costs me a fifty."

"And a permanent job," I suggested.

"Here he comes."

Gayne got his hat and now joined us. We all three stepped lively to the Barclay Street Ferry. As we sped along I kept plying Gayne with questions—did he know Perry—did he know Miss Slade? How long had he known her? Had he heard about the box of candy? What did he think about Perry and his card? Had Miss Pollyton any enemies? Was there anybody in love with Miss Slade? Wasn't she pretty? And so on.

Reaching the Lackawanna Station in Hoboken, I discovered that we had nearly ten minutes to spare, as we had caught a boat ahead. I asked Gayne why he always took the ferry instead of the tube, and he said he didn't, but he had during the last week—the air was so bad in the tube, and he liked the view of the river.

"Wait a minute," I shouted. "There's time enough. I want to buy some peanuts—have a passion for peanuts. This was how I bribed the train boy in advance with a new dollar bill.

I came back presently with three bags. The others declined.

Then we settled ourselves in the Montclair train. I sat with Gayne and Tomlinson sat in the seat ahead.

"You were telling me," I said, "about Miss Slade." Wonderfully pretty girl. Must have many admirers. Have you any idea why she turned Perry down?"

"Not the slightest."

"I'm quite sure that she is in love with him. I studied her face closely when he came into the room. Perhaps you know how it feels when you are in love."

"I might."

"Ever been in love?"

"That's personal."

"I don't see how you could help falling in love with Miss Slade yourself. I gather that you have seen a good deal of her.

"Not so much." Gayne was growing taciturn.

THE train boy was coming down the aisle selling candy—shouting it out in the usual ungrammatical style. Suddenly he stopped right over us—and forced a small box under Gayne's nose.

"Burnt almonds?" he shouted.

Gayne forgot himself completely. The lines of his hitherto impassive face tightened up as if they had been brought together by a turn screw.

"No, no," he cried, starting up, "Get out? I hate 'em! Get along!"

I made a sign to Tomlinson and grabbed him.

"Robert Gayne," I whispered, "I arrest you for the murder of Elizabeth Pollyton."

He sank back, wilting under the sudden pressure.

"What's the matter with you?" he gasped. "How do you get it?" he actually smiled.

"By a series of inevitable conclusions, based and backed up by incontrovertible evidence," I replied. "You were Miss Pollyton's confidential adviser. You made out all of her papers. You met Miss Slade at her aunt's house, and fell in love with her. You knew that Miss Pollyton had left her money to charity. You worked upon her by subtle means and got her to change her will. You used this to influence Miss Slade in your favor. She encouraged your attentions because it was through you that the will was changed, and you held this up. She was really in love with Perry, and held him off because of your influence exerted over her. You were vain enough to believe that you could force her to marry you. Perry's attentions to her and her love for him, she kept from you, receiving you separately. You knew of Miss Pollyton's appetite for burnt almonds. You got Perry's card, and sent it with the box of chocolates as a blind, on top of which were three almonds, loaded with morphine, which being bitter like almonds, afforded an almost perfect disguise. She ate two of them, and the third, probably disturbed by her dog—who had, believe me, a narrow escape—rolled into a crack, and was recovered and analyzed this afternoon."

"It's a lie," shouted Gayne. The other passengers were getting interested. In fact, the car was in an uproar.

"Yes, it is a lie," said Tomlinson, suddenly showing his badge. I must say he proved himself an expert, for by a swift movement he had locked my hands in the handcuffs while he smiled at me cheerfully.

"Old man," he said. "I'm sorry—more than sorry, but the jigs up. I knew you were Robert Slade, Beatrice Slade's brother, since day before yesterday. That's why I sent for you."

"My name is Herrick," I replied stoutly. "You ought to know. We fougnt side by side."

"Your name was Herrick up to 1917—when you enlisted. Before that it was Robert Slade. I saw your picture in the Gallery—you are now wanted in Texas. To Miss Pollyton you were Robert Slade—to others Jim Herrick."

"Do you think I would have been such an ass," I said, "as to have gone into his case?"

"Vanity, my boy, pure vanity. It clouded your judgment. You thought you could fasten it, as Herrick, on to this man Gayne here. Later you trusted to luck to get rid of the Texas affair and eventually get the money. She liked burnt almonds and you sent her some—once before. You doctored the ones that killed her."

"How did you know I'd seen my—Miss Pollyton?" I sneered. Tomlinson produced a crumpled sheet.

"Because," he replied. "We found this among her papers. She wouldn't employ a secretary—had learned to write on the typewriter herself, and always kept a carbon copy.

"That's the letter I fished out," said Gayne, also smiling cheerfully. "Oh yes," he said. "I was in on this of course. Burnt almonds! Ha! I hate 'em!"

Tomlinson read me the letter—as he put it—to "refresh" my memory. It was dated on the same day of the second will, and was as follows:

"Robert: As stated to you in our interview on Thursday evening—at the end of five years from my death you will receive the income from a portion of my estate I have set aside for you in trust. While I do not trust you implicitly, I am doing this for my dead sister's sake, and I hope that you will eventually make the best use of it. I have not many years to live.

"Elizabeth Pollyton."

"P. S.: Will you send me the name and address of the place where you got the burnt almonds you sent me and which are the best I have had? My puppy dog chewed up the box.—E. P."

Some Story!

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HEART THROBS

Conducted by Ila Damon

Have you difficulties of head or heart in which you need sympathetic counsel and practical advice? Have the threads of your life become knotted, tangled, and involved? What is the problem nearest your heart? Write us about it.

Ila Damon, out of her deep knowledge of psychology, her tender-heartedness, her wide experience and knowledge, will help you to find the way to happiness and usefulness.

Or, perhaps you have had some problem to solve, some deep heart experience that may prove of inspiration and help to other travelers on Life's Highway.

Tell us about it.

Address: Heart Throbs, care of this Magazine.

HERE is a story of a man with what seems to be a perverted idea of what constitutes religion. The story is so well told and the girl who writes it so evidently above the average of her type that I have decided to publish ir verbatim, merely withholding names. And, too, it has the element of mystery. The mystery being how a man can hold such absurd ideas of what constitutes right and wrong.

The letter is from a young girl in a Southern state. She writes: I am eighteen years old. When I was fifteen I went into the country to work at a farmer's house. There I met a man, twenty-eight years old. My mother had never told me the things a girl should know. I do not blame her. I suppose she thought there was no danger.

This man used to tell me that he loved me, and I was lonely and his presence made me happy, so I thought I loved him. Now I am not sure although many nights I cry when I think of those days of folly.

When I felt sick, I went home. Mother took me to the doctor's and he told her that I would become a mother.

The man would not marry me because I was not of his religion. Of course my father could have forced him to do this, but I would not permit it. I think I hated the man in those days. All summer I was wretched, trying to hide my condition and feeling that every one's eyes were upon me in condemnation.

Finally, in November, I left home for the city, and my baby girl was born in February in a Maternity home. I hated it at first. A nice family legally adopted it. It is now nearly two years old and I love it dearly. I wish I could have it back. I never so much as looked at another man until one year ago. Nevertheless, my reputation was very bad as everyone seemed to know what had happened to me. Then I met Harold. I made the big mistake of telling him all about myself and my unhappy affair. Telling myself that I may as well be bad since everyone thought me so, I determined to do as Harold suggested and live with him.

I soon found that Harold was a flirt. He has actually brought other girls into our house. I know this. I am very jealous of him, and he does not deny that he goes with every girl he can get to "fall" for him. I don't know what to do about it. I think I love him, but his actions drive me crazy. Still, he doesn't want me to leave him and he gives me plenty of money and beautiful clothes.

My mother wants me to come home. But the first man is there—the father of my baby. After the baby came, he told my mother that he would marry me if I would join his church. My answer then was that it was too late now. He should have thought of that earlier.

What shall I do? Shall I leave Harold and go home? And if so, should I join this man's religion and marry him as he will probably ask me to do?

Or shall I go to a strange city and try to make something of myself? I have acquired a fair education and I have a very good voice. Would you advise me to go far away from my present home and try to forget everything connected with my past? Please give me your advice and if you want to preach, unlike Rosemary, I'll accept even that if you will only advise me.

Answer.—Your letter is well written and shows *mental* intelligence but not very much moral intelligence. It takes the two to make a high order of character—which you very wisely aim to possess. It seems to me that your present situation is extremely degrading. Not merely because you are living with a man to whom you are not legally married, but because you permit him to subject you to every possible insult and then repay you with fine clothes and "plenty of money to spend." Any situation would be better than the one you are now in. Your first move then, is to leave the man you are now living with.

Marriage with him would not mend matters. A man who has no instinctive respect for women—has nothing. He is characterless, and could never make you happy. The other man evidently has a perverted sense of religion and morality. To bring an innocent child into the world under the handicap of no legal father is a crime; to destroy the self-respect and reputation of a girl is another crime. No religion would justify such a thing. Still, I have known otherwise rather decent men to do this very thing—put their creed before their morality. And so it is possible that this man might make you a good husband despite his moral blindness. It all comes down to the question: "Do you love him enough to be tolerant and patient with him, teaching him what real religion and true morality are?" If so, marry him. The creed one professes makes little difference. Conduct is the real test—and even conduct must be actuated by moral principles and innate justice and right—not the mere blind following of certain laid-down rules and practises. If you do not love the father of your child well enough to guide and help him, then I would advise you to go to some other city and make your own way—holding fast to self-respect and an unshakable faith in the triumph of Truth and Right—these will not fail you if you trust and serve them.

AND here is another problem of a different kind, and yet with the same old setting—as old as Human life—the eternal problem of Love—living love and love that has died, or is dying, for want of the sustenance upon which love feeds—devotion, romance, idealism, faith and trust. This problem is a man's plea to know what he can do to win back his wife. He writes:

Two years ago my wife broke up our home, and went to live with her father, taking our little six year old son. She left because of her mother's death and because her father needed her. Now she will not return to me. Neither will she get a divorce. When I went to see her last July, she appeared shocked and greatly agitated, as though something was quite wrong. Now she does not answer my letters, even returning some of them unopened. I have not been a success at anything. I have been away from my wife and boy at long periods of time. I went to France of my own free will, as I was not drafted. It seems to me my wife is under some kind of agreement with her father or some other man not to see me. Her father is wealthy and lets her travel and do what she wants. I can not give her the things he can, but I love her. How can I win her back to me?

Answer.—Most women demand from the man they marry or from the man who professes to love them, the sort of devotion that puts them before everything else in life. This is as instinctive with the female of the species, as the preservation of life. A woman will forgive the most terrible vices in a man, if, throughout all his wickedness, he can convince her that she comes first, last, and all the time, in his thoughts and acts.

Lacking this evidence, a woman argues that a man's love is a very shadowy thing—and all his protestations fall on deaf ears.

You have shown that your wife does not come first in your thoughts and in your life. If you are sincere in wanting her back, show her that you are sincere. First of all, get yourself a job that will support her and your boy. Do not abuse *her* by letter, or by thought. Hold to the one essential thing—that you love her and want to make her happy. If you are sincere in this—the desire for her happiness rather than your own—she will come back to you. But bluffing will never do—it must be a real, true and sincere wish for her love and her happiness—not as your right because of marriage—but as a boon from Heaven—the one desirable thing in life. Can you do this? If so, you win. Love will find a way.

A SOLDIER stationed in a Southern state, tells his problem. It is a problem of loneliness, yearning for congenial companionship and as he puts it "something to pass the time."

It is a dreadful thing that there are some who want to "pass the time away" and others want to halt the flying feet of the relentless old man with the scythe. Of the two, the ones who want to "pass the time away" are most to be pitied. They have found nothing of absorbing interest, and lack the anchor of the ties that hold one's rambling desires in leash. This soldier's problem is easy of solution, if he will really take the advice he asks for. Will he? He writes:

"I am a soldier and I am awfully lonesome. No one in the town where I am stationed will notice a soldier. We are allowed to wear civilian clothes which helps some but as soon as they find out we are soldiers, they have nothing to do with us. I am twenty-one years old and am clean and neat and have no bad habits. Could you put me in touch with some Correspondence Club? I want some one to write to "to pass the time away." Not a matrimonial club, just a Lonesome Club or something."

Answer.—If you are only twenty-one, that means that Life is before you to make of yourself what you will. Never mind the people who "snub" you because you are a soldier. The only real bar of justice is your own conscience—and your own estimate of yourself.

There is just one sensible thing for you to do. Will you do it? I hope so. Loneliness is a terrible thing to endure, but there's a remedy if you will take it.

Study! You say you have plenty of time. Study! Your letter shows lack of education, and it also shows a very good mind. A lack of education may be overcome, with a good mind. A bad mind cannot be overcome even by a good education. Decide upon some thing that you want to learn—engineering, mechanics, photography, stenography, agriculture—whatever appeals to you—and study! Get the best books on the subject and study them. Study grammar, English literature, history—cultivate your mind. You will surely find some school teacher who will, for a very little money, help you. Make yourself so desirable that you will be desired as the companion of the best and most cultured person in the town—or any other town. You have promised to take my advice. I hope you will do this, and that you will report to me later that you are STUDYING.

"GERTRUDE B" sends a story that does not "ring true." She tells of mysterious kidnappings, detention in houses of debauchery and vileness, and her final escape without serious mishap a la the heroine in movie-land. And then she says that she is working for a big manufacturing concern in a large city, as a trusted and efficient stenographer, asking, "What shall I do?"

The logical answer to "Gertrude B" is to either curb her too vivid imagination, or take a course in journalism, and put said imagination to good use by following the advice of a famous advertisement, a bit paraphrased, but nevertheless worth repeating: Don't envy writers of mystery stories, write them yourself.

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Hot Keys

(*Continued from page* 20)

But he ran upstairs into his office, unscrewed a lamp bulb, manipulated the socket, and then, as the lights went out suddenly, ran downstairs to the basement to the quarters of the elderly night watchman.

"Something's wrong with my lights," he reported. "They're out, and I want to work a while." Then, with ready amiability, "I expect it's only a blown fuse. If you'll show me where the fuses are, I'll change it myself."

The watchman laid down his last edition. "Right over there," he said, and pointed to an adjoining room where the meters and service switches of the various suites of the old building were located.

Gene went in, changed his fuses after a rapid examination of all, and a careful inspection of a particular pair, and then, emerging, went upstairs again, that subdued eagerness growing steadily.

In his office he opened an instrument case, took out a disc approximately the size of a dinner plate, and, fastening it to a long wooden handle, made a few quick flexible cord connections, slipped a pair of telephone receivers over his head, and began walking slowly about the room, the disc held close to the ceiling.

Half down one side of the room he stopped, paused, turned, that subdued eagerness growing sharply, moved a short distance, stopped again, turned, and, repeating this maneuver, completed a roughly defined circle some two or three feet across as traced by the disc overhead. Then, his gray eyes bright but strangely shadowed, he climbed up on a table, marked this circle with inconspicuous pencil lines, repacked his instrument, and went out, but not to his room.

INSTEAD, he returned to the factory, gained ready admission to the repair shop, quickly put together a framework of heavy iron pipe the size of the circle he had traced, and the next afternoon at five o'clock when he closed his door and went upstairs to the office of Dr. Blansford, this circle of heavy iron pipe was hanging from the ceiling in the penciled lines he had marked out.

Blair was already there when he entered, talking with boyish enthusiasm to the throat specialist while he installed the test lamp on the stand beside the adjustable steel chair, but looking for the most part at Ruth Curtis, back at work, paler, and with that steady calm about her, and something else that kindled softly whenever her eyes met Blair's.

"This test seems to have taken on the proportions of an occasion," Dr. Blansford remarked, a slight smile relieving his pale features and the professional intentness of his eyes.

Gene smiled back. "Yes?"

Blair looked up, his big blue eyes lighting with eagerness. "Mighty glad you've come. Just a minute now and we'll be ready," he said.

He went on with his changing of connections while the girl and the doctor watched and Gene watched the three of them, that subdued eagerness of the night before replaced by a steadily increasing tension he had difficulty in concealing.

Blair finished, laid down his tools, and straightened.

"Then you think your changes have corrected those defects in the reds," Dr. Blansford suggested.

The young manufacturer nodded. "I think so." He turned to the chair. "I'll be the subject so all of you can watch."

The girl moved forward, adjusted the polished head rest for him, and Dr. Blansford took up his position. "You want me to proceed as if I were examining you?" he inquired, professionally precise.

Blair nodded. "Exactly," and leaning back, dropped his hands naturally on the steel chair arms.

Gene stood up and moved to Dr. Blansford's shoulder. The girl stepped back on the other side where she too could see, and Gene took the opportunity to give the lamp a quick close inspection. Outwardly it was the same lamp Blair had showed him in his plant, save that the circular opening in the metal shell was covered by a lense-like disc of queerly opaque glass.

"All right," the doctor said. Blair settled himself in the chair. The doctor's fingers found the switch. Gene leaned forward, body taut with that new tension, and Blair, smiling up at the three of them, opened his mouth.

The light flashed up, a focused beam. But before the doctor could direct it, before Gene could be sure of its quality, Blair twitched erect with a startled cry of pain and amazement.

"What's wrong? What's wrong?" he demanded, his face pale and his breath catching. "I—I got a shock!"

There was an instant of silence, a queer startled silence. Catching his breath, the doctor sat down on the nearest chair. Then Gene's hand dropped on his shoulder. "Dr. Blansford," he asked quietly, "Didn't you electrocute Jim Curtis in this chair?"

A HALF hour later Mark Roberts leaned over and peered into a hole ripped in the wood flooring at the spot where the treatment chair had stood. In the space between the floor and ceiling was a roughly square mass of iron surrounded by a coil of heavy wire with two connecting wires leading away under the boards.

"You see," Gene explained, from the opposite side of the opening, "This is what we call a primary coil. He had things arranged so he could turn lighting current into it from a switch on the lamp stand."

Mark considered, eyeing the exposed coil with a frown. "But lighting current won't kill a man under normal conditions," he protested. "And you said there was no connection between this and the chair."

Gene nodded. "The chair could be rolled around anywhere. But here." He pointed to the chair, dismantled now, and with a wire dangling from its base. "In the bottom framework," he said, "he had another coil, a secondary we call it, designed so that when the chair was in position over this coil in the floor, the two would act as a step-up transformer, giving a voltage in the chair even higher than that you use for electrocutions in the penitentiary. I've showed you how he made contact with the head rest and arms. So when the man in the chair was gripping the arms as he naturally does when someone's fooling with his throat, and had the back of his neck touching the head rest, all the doctor had to do was turn the switch and the thing was done. Do you see?"

Mark looked from the coil exposed in the floor to the dismantled chair and back again. "So that's how old Jim got his," he reflected, his gray eyes somber.

"And Blair his," Gene added, "if I hadn't rigged pipe in my office downstairs so it would shortcircuit the magnetic field." He turned his head to listen to a relentless drone of voices from the outer office. "Do you suppose they'll get him to tell why he did it?" he asked.

Mark reached into an inside pocket. "Maybe this will help," he said, and drew out a long white envelope with "Open tomorrow night," across its front in the sharp angular hand Gene had seen before.

He tore off an end and drew out its contents, a few sheets of paper folded and sealed. "Read at once if Milton Blair is still alive, and burn without reading if he is dead," he read off its face, and frowning, broke the seals.

The relentless drone of voices from the outer office went on. Mark scanned the first sheet swiftly while Gene stepped to his side, intent with new interest.

"Yes," Mark said quietly as he turned the second sheet. "Blansford's been in on Jim's deals all the time; he was the man mentioned once or twice in his trials but whose name Jim never would tell. Jim was trying to make him kill young Blair or be exposed, don't you see? That explains why Jim didn't mention Blair in his will, these letters left to Blansford, and why Blansford tried to get Blair a while ago. Blansford thought if he killed Jim he'd be through with the thing, but Jim had these papers fixed so that if Blansford didn't kill Blair within three days after he died, Blansford would be exposed anyhow. A nice business."

The door opened and Captain Merwin, chief of city detectives, stepped in. "Confessed everything," he reported briefly. Then, his keen gray eyes on Gene, "How'd you ever figure this out?"

Gene flushed. "Oh, I got a look at his fuses last night, and when I found out they were big enough for about ten times the current he'd need normally, that made me suspicious. Then I located this transformer in the floor with an exploring coil from my office downstairs. An exploring coil will show up any metal objects, you know. And then I just waited to see what he'd do this afternoon, after I'd fixed things so he couldn't hurt anybody."

Merwin considered, frowning. "You knew all the time he'd electrocuted him?"

"No." Gene was steadily frank. "I thought at first this lamp of Blair's had killed Jim. Blair had a motive you know, and light does queer things sometimes."

The detective's frown deepened. "Then what made you think anything at all? We didn't. This doctor had himself covered too well for that."

Gene smiled. "Here. Stand at the edge of this hole and you'll see. You too, uncle Mark," to the warden, "Leave your watches on the table though," he added.

He turned to the lamp stand and snapped on the switch. The two others stepped to the spot he indicated and stood looking down at the exposed bulk of iron and wire, half puzzled, just a bit apprehensive, while Gene eyed them expectantly. A few moments passed.

"Are we supposed to——" Captain Merwin stopped abruptly and clapped a hand to his trousers pocket. "What the devil's wrong?" he demanded. "My keys are hotter'n blazes!"

Gene chuckled triumphantly. "That's induction," he explained, shutting off the switch as his uncle too clapped a hand to his trousers pocket. "This coil in the floor can set up current in any metal object near it just as it sets up current in the other coil, and your keys are metal. But the current in them is simply heavy because they are short and they become hot. This is the principle of the induction welder. That gave me the electrocution idea."

He laughed as the two men shook their pockets vigorously to keep the hot keys away from their thighs. "That's what happened to me the night Jim was murdered," he went on. "I came in here with uncle Mark to help him hunt his pipe and he must have got hold of the wrong switch when he turned on more light, because when I stood by the chair a minute or two the keys in my pocket began to heat up just like yours now. That was the only clue I had."

Captain Merwin thrust his hand into his pocket, jerked out his keys, and dropped them promptly to the floor. "Well, I'll say it was a hot one, all right," he declared emphatically.

Good Paper

(*Continued from page* 14)

the white texture Goddard's gaze was riveted on the small wet circle. Suddenly he seized the book and held it closer to assure himself his imagination had not tricked him.

No. Now he was positive. He saw faint outlines show through where the drop had fallen. It caused a near transparency in the paper. Something was written on the underside. Morehead's mouth sagged as Goddard drew out his pocket knife and ran the narrow blade around the edge of the paper separating it from the cloth binding of the book. The paper, he discovered, was pasted only at the edges. It came away readily and fluttered to the floor, bottom side up.

In an instant Goddard had it in his hands and was examining a check for ninety-five hundred and fifty dollars. He tossed it across the table to Morehead.

"Your signature forged on the back as an endorsement," he said quietly. "Come. Get a hold on yourself. You'll need your wits if you ever needed them before!"

(*To be continued*)

The end of "Good Paper" will keep you waiting impatiently and it's worth it.

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In the dark he caught her closely. All her straining nerves relaxed.

The Girl Who Was Looking For Galagher

(*Continued from page* 11)

"Yes, I do!"

He touched her hand.

"You know me, Renie. I'm your friend. This Galagher's an alright guy," he said. He twirled his glass stem. "Say, it's eighteen months since he's been in the town an' never once got mixed up with the crook stuff. See? He knows a lot." He stopped a moment. "Rene, he knows the way some fellows cut Jim Braley. He knows what they did t'Rahberg. He knows all about who put the silencer on Duffy. But he never squeals! Say, Hagedorn, the new police chief would get busy if he knew what Galagher could tell 'im. Tom's alright! He runs his car an' makes his bit an' minds his own. He's got a mother and a sister in Toledo——!"

"Don't I know it?"

"Do y'?"

"Sure!" She lifted up her head. "He sends 'em dough. Yal, *that's* the reason he ain't married me. The old bird likes t'think *she's* got 'im."

"Told y' he was good." he said.

The young girl rocked herself, locked in the cradle of her folded arms.

"He ain't been good t'me. He said he'd marry me. But look——" Once more her teeth went down upon her hand. "He's got a girl! He's got a girl! They say he went outside the town t'get 'er. Now he's got 'er in the flat! My Gawd!" she anguished. "Oh, my Gawd——"

"Rene, maybe it ain't true."

"It's true! It's true!" The girl laughed wildly. "People seen 'im with 'er! Everybody's laughin' at me! Yal——" Her eyes filled up with tears. "He's got a girl! An' I ain't got 'im——"

"Rene——" The young man laid a sympathetic hand upon her arm. "Don't carry on."

She sobbed out louder.

"I'm your friend."

"Yal, I don't want y'!"

"Aw——" The young man bit his lips. "Y'want this square guy, don't y'? Listen——" He bent further to her. "I can fix it, Rene." His fingers tightened on his glass stem. "Lemme fix it! I'm your friend! Go on an' drink your beer!"

The young girl drank. Hope filled her eyes. But then it died. The young man looked down at her, wondering if he could dissuade her. He stared above her head. Four men had entered. Each was hatless, coatless, furtively excited but yet curiously calm. One beckoned to the seated Yalla as the four disposed themselves against a wall. Young Carney looked down at the girl whose sobs were lost in competition with the pianola. "Kid, don't cry. An' don't go 'way." he said.

He rose, a massive figure with his yellow face above a white blouse open at the throat. He walked across the smoke-filled room and sat down with his four familiars. And he looked them over.

"What's the dope?"

Four sweat-disheveled heads belonging to "Red" Durgan, "Pinknose" Rafferty, "Cauliflower" Jake, and Louis Green—a man whose face had once been slashed wide, with a pen knife, lengthwise and across—bent close together. "Pinknose," so named for his rosette-hued proboscis, was the first to speak.

"Now look here Yalla——" Even though the music blared, his voice was pitched discreetly low. The others had to bend to hear it. "We're in dutch!"

"With who?"

"With Hagedonn, the new police chief, see? He's got it on us! Freightyard graft! The Braley cuttin'! Rahberg! Duffy! Everything——"

YOUNG Carney shifted and his yellow face went grey.

"They must have pinched somebody. Say——" He searched the faces for two, which he missed. "Where's Deegan? Where's Frank Collough?"

"'cross the river! In the Big Town! They'll be here by twelve o'clock or so. It ain't them, Yalla!"

"Who! Then who?"

The answer came four ways at once.

"It's Galagher!"

"Tom Galagher!"

Young Carney passed a sweated hand across his sweated hair.

"Now where the hell does he come in t'squeal? I thought he was a close-mouth guy."

"Me too!"

"An' me!"

A flaming head leaned to a knife-scarred face. "You tell 'im, Jake!"

Words issued from a mouth askew.

"Say, we've been dead above the ears!" said "Cauliflower" Jake. "This Galagher's a bull!"

"A bull!"—incredulously.

"Yeah!"

Came silence for a moment.

"Mean t'say he's tipped our mitts?"

"That's what."

Another silence.

"How long's he been in the town?" asked Carney, with a point of light in his small eyes.

"A year!"

"An' six months, ain't it?"

"Yeah. He eased 'imself into the gang with both feet an' his hair down in a braid." said Durgan of the flaming hair.

The yellow boy once more broke silence.

"Now we fellows all l'have t'blow the town."

Four others hacked sardonic laughter.

"Ain't he smart!"

"The kid's dam' clever!"

"Wise guy!" offered Louis Green, he of the knife-slashed face. "Suppose *you* try it!"

"What's the matter?"

"Ferries watched. No way of gettin' out." He leaned down closer and he tapped the table. "Listen, Yalla! Get this, see? A pinch! At midnight! Us—! The seven—!"

"Seven! Hell! What seven? Deegan an' Ralph Collough's safe across the river."

"But they're commin' back."

"For what?"

"They don't know nothin'."

"Let 'em know."

"*You* try it!" slithered Cauliflower Jake. The others grinned without amusement. "They'll be back by midnight. When they get here an' we're all in town——" He motioned. "Pinch! Y'get it?"

"Sure I get it. You yeggs make me sick; you know it all. Go on an' tell me why they don't just grab us an' wire across for Dee an' Collough, will y'?"

"Hagedorn," said Green.

"He's got t'show the world he's one dam' fine police chief, ain't he?"

"Sure! We're caught!"

"Like rats! All in one trap!"

"With Galagher the star against us!"

Carney, with his brow in wrinkles still sat thinking deeply.

"What's the answer?"

"Galagher!" said Rafferty. "The dick!"

"You mean——"

"We got t'get 'im out the way!"

"But how?"

Four men leaned to the yellow boy.

"You got us in! You get us out!"

"You told us Galagher was all o.k."

"You said t'let 'im drive the car the night we stuck up Braley."

"Yeah! You said he didn't know what we were out t'do, but after it was done he'd keep his mouth shut."

Carney's brow was clammy.

"Gawd! I never thought he was a dick!"

A pink nose wagged in affirmation.

"Oh, he is, alright. We got t'put the rollers on 'im."

"Yeah!"

"That's right, alright!"

MIKE CARNEY pondered deeply. Then he rose, his eyes set out on space.

"Just wait. I'll can m'skirt. I think I got the dope."

He left his fellows and he weaved his way among the loungers. Irene Rankin's eyes were dry. Her lips were cracked. But still she arose to greet him.

"Yalla, listen——"

"Rene, sit down——"

"Say, you're m'friend now, ain't y'?"

"Sure!"

"You'll help me, won't y'?"

"Rene, you know I'll help y'!"

"Help me kill that man!" she said.

He simulated disappointment.

"Rene, I thought that you was gonna let me fix it."

"No, I ain't!"

The young man baited her with sentiments he did not feel.

"Rene, better let me fix it."

"No!"

"Why not?"

"Because!"

"Aw, Rene——"

"I'm tellin' y', I won't!" she said.

He tested her determination, further.

"Say, I'd like t'help y', but——" His eyes half closed. "Rene, I don't wanna get *m'self* in dutch."

The young girl's hands went out to lay themselves upon his arms.

"I'm gonna kill 'im!"

"Rene, aw——" You're a girl. You won't."

"I will!" she said. She laid both pleading hands upon his shoulders. "Yal, you keep on sayin' you're my friends!"

"I am."

"You ain't!"

He settled closer. "Rene, I'd *like* t'help y' but——" His eyes made slits. "I'll get in dutch."

The young girl made despairing motions.

"You're a friend! Oh, you're a friend!"

He eyes her, silent for a moment.

"I'm your friend. I'll get in dutch, but say——" His eye-slits closed. "Rene, aw—— Alright! I'll help y'!"

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THE GIRL WHO WAS LOOKING FOR GALAGHER

"Will y'?"

"Yeah! But wait! Rene, wait!" He lifted up a warning finger. "Let *me* do this, will y'?" He sat still a moment, lost in thought. "Look! Here's the layout! Walk out slow! Go down the drug-store! Hide the gat! I'll get a car an' we'll go drivin' round until the streets gets clear of people! Then we'll drive up to the flat. You'll call Tom Galagher out in the hall," he said. "You'll plug 'im an' we'll drive away. No one'll ever know it."

"No! No one'll ever know it! Yal——" She flung impulsive hands across the table. "You're m'friend! Oh, you're m'friend!"

He smiled approval on her.

"I'm your friend alright. Irene, now beat it, will y'?"

* * * * *

IRENE RANKIN left the place, a small, pathetic figure in a skirt too long, a waist too short. And Carney watched her to the door. This time the conversation, when he went back to his gang, was started with no preliminaries whatsoever.

"Now y'canned the dame, sit down an' tell us what you're gonna do." said Green, the man of knife-scarred face.

Young Carney swept a look around the table.

"That there dame ain't canned. She's gonna do the skid trick, see? She's gonna put the rollers on 'im."

"Galagher's own queen! G'wan!"

"He threw 'er down!"

"What of it?"

"This——" The yellow fellow's chin came forward. "See? She's gonna kill 'im!"

"Aw——"

"He's got another dame up in his flat." he said.

Four pairs of fixed, attentive eyes reflected four slow-working minds.

"*She's* gonna kill 'im?"

"*Her?*"

"*That girl?*"

"Say, she ain't got the guts t'kill a fly, she ain't?"

"She ain't, eh, ain't she?"

"Say——" The man whose face was decorated with the scar leaned on the table. "You work fast. But get this!" His square fingers beat a tattoo. "No girl kills a guy she's stuck on!"

"Don't she? Fellows——"

Cauliflower Jake caressed his ear.

"She does!" he said. "The question is, will this one do it?"

Carney: "Sure! Why not?"

"A Jane! An' crazy with the heat!"

"All Janes are crazy! This one's gonna plug 'im!"

"Is she?"—grunting—"Where's she gonna get 'im?"

"We're the babies gonna take 'er to 'im, see? We drive 'er to the flat! She goes inside! She calls 'im out——"

Derisively: "You mean she *bawls* 'im out!"

From Rafferty: "She hollers til she gets a crowd! She shoots 'im through the arm or leg! She screams an' pumps the gat into 'erself—or else she runs an' hits the river! Women! Grandstand players! Movie queens! I know 'em!"

"Do y'?" Carney bent disgusted looks upon the ceptics. "You yeggs make me sick!" he said. He rested on his chair edge. "Listen! Here's the way it works! This girl has got a gat! We get it! An' we clear a chamber! Then we get a gun just like it 'fore we send 'er in! She plugs 'im!"

"Does she!"

"Sure she 'does she'!" Carney stared into the four expectant faces. "If she don't we do it, see? We drive away! They find *her* with the body! Gun! One chamber empty! One pill gone! He paused. "Tom Galagher is out the way!" he said. "We claim a frameup, see it?"

FOUR men sat lost in amazement. Four men stared. At last four voices gave approval.

"I'll be damned!"

"Me too!"

"An' me!"

Dead silence for a moment.

"Yalla, you're a peach." said Cauliflower Jake. "Get busy!"

And they did.

THEY got a car. They changed the license plate. They bundled in, five fellows out, ostensibly, to make a night. They picked the girl up at the drug store. She was still implacable in her determination. Yalla drove. The young girl in the straw bonnet sat beside him. Cauliflower Jake, Green with the scar, Red Durgan and Pink Rafferty were crowded in the tonneau. No one spoke till Yalla turned upon the girl. "Rene, lemme see that gat." he said. She brought it out. He gave it a pretended, close survey, then tossed it to the back. "You fellows look an' see that it's alright."

They did. Four fingered it before they gave it back. But when it came across one chamber had been emptied. They rode through the night. The press of business ended. All electrics went back to the nothing whence they came. The sweat-bathed people, sitting at their stores, went indoors, driven by the lash of sleep. Still they drove on.

At last the car crunched down into a wayside street—and stopped. The girl sprang out. She walked across the curb as quickly as her too-tight skirt permitted. Irene Rankin knew the house. She knew the flat. But yet she did not go upstairs. She stood a moment in the hall and pressed her hands against her breast to still the beating of a heart whose placement, changing, seemed to want to find a lodging in her anxious throat. She heard a footstep overhead, and tense, she cocked her small revolver. Outside on the curb, five men whose lives hung by a thread prayed that her aim be true.

The footsteps sounded—ceased—and sounded—. And the five men waited, not impatient. Say, it takes some time to climb up to a fourth floor, back. It takes some time to call a man out in the night.

"The Menace"

by

R. T. M. Scott

next week will make you rear back and fall over

The young girl turned. She left her place beside the stairs and walked behind it . And her feet went shuffling out for something in the hall. Did Irene Rankin know just *what* thing she wanted? Sure! Milk bottles! But her shuffling feet encountered no milk bottles in the hall. Those bottles had to be there soon. She knew from habit and experience that Tom would bring 'em down. She did not err. The darkness folded her unto itself just like a pall. A door she knew went open. Then it closed. A man's decided footstep sounded. And the girl's acute, fear-sharpened ears strained to the sound. Oh, it was Tom, alright. She hated, hated, hated—! No, she loved 'im! No, she hated 'im—! She loved 'im——

She came out of her corner and she swayed up to the stairway as the figure of a man, descending, loomed out largely in the night. He pressed himself against the wall to let the woman pass him. But she made no move.

"Irene, that you——?"

She fell against him. In the dark, he held her closely. All her straining nerves relaxed. He caught the glitter of the small revolver.

"Rene," he said. "Look out! Irene——!" He swung her backward as a shot rang out. A spurt of flame! A grunt! But not from her nor her revolver. On the ledge between the street door and the hall, a man of yellow face went down beneath the impact of a big man's heavy body catapulted from above.

The young girl clutched the rail in speechless fascination. Two men swayed. One man projected all his strength behind a stunning blow. A lurch! A counter movement! And a smash against a yellow chin. A man sagged, then subsided with his wrists encircled by two bands of steel. An interval of seconds only! Born from darkness, shadows rose. They intergrated into fighting figures, as, from on the curb, four men, hot on the scent, rushed in. The hunters battled with the hunted. Grunts and curses! Labored breathing! Scuffling noises! Shots rang wild! Men danced together in the darkness. Threats—and answers! Gutterals!—and then fewer curses! Right and Might gained strength—and won! Came louder wheezes! Sobbing whispers!

"Get 'im, Rene!"

"You get 'im!"

"He's a dick!"

"He double-crossed us! Get 'im——"

Crack! A handle butt upon a head. A long-drawn sigh——

In quiet exultation: "Oh, boy! Steady——"

"Lemme put the bracelets on this last one! Ah——"

"We got 'em all now, Tom!"

Tom Galagher was speaking: "Good boys! Take 'em out an' use the car they came in."

Right!"

Finale——One by one, three men around a group already silent with the stoicism of the men who gamble with their lives and lose, filed from the hall. Outside, the grating noise of brakes. A motor purring. Then the crunch of wheels——. Inside, a veil of smoke disintergrating as the young girl crumpled up into the big man's arms.

"You—you——" she said.

"Rene——"

"You—! A dick!"

He nodded.

"You—you double-crossed 'em!"

"No!" he said. "I got 'em right!"

The young girl drew herself erect and pushed the big man from her.

"Gawd!" she said. "You double-crossed 'em. Sure!"

THE man's voice, low and grippingly distinct was freighted with his feeling.

"Rene, I never double-crossed nobody, no! They tried t'use *me* for a come-on, but I got 'em, see? They couldn't play *me* for no catspaw like they're playin' you."

"Me!"

"You! Yes, you!" He stretched a hand to touch her. "Renie, don't you know they wanted *you* t'do me up so *they* could come off clean? They came here for t'watch you shoot me, or t'shoot me *for* y', understand? Rene, oh," he said. "I knew that they was gonna steer y'here, an' I was waitin' for 'em. That's the reason why I had those men around!" He bent above her. "See, it's you that got the double-cross—not them, Irene! It's *you!* They double-crossed *you*, Rene, don't y'see it?"

Silence! Then the young girl gulped. She swallowed.

"Tom, I see!" she said. She started sobbing. "They!they double-crossed me but—but you——" She flung herself against him. "You—you double-crossed me too! I—I don't care about them other fellows but——I hate y' Tom, I hate y'! I—I came t'kill y'!"

"Did y', Rene!" He raised her chin and gazed into her stormy eyes. "Say, women don't kill men they hate."

"Eh—? Don't they?"—blinking.

"No! They kill the men they love! Go on——" He curled her fingers on the small revolver. "Shoot! You wanna kill me, don't y?"

"No! Tom, no!" She suffered in a swift revulsion. "You—you're right! I love y' but——" She pressed herself against him. "I don't want to kill y', Tom——" She offered him the sacrifice of most complete renunciation. "You can love somebody else now. I won't mind."

He hushed the sobbing woman into silence.

"Renie, don't! Say, wher'd you get that stuff about me lovin' some one else?"

Her voice died into hicking whispers.

"You—you never came t'Flossie's. You—you got a girl——."

"A girl—!" His jaw dropped down. "Rene, that's my sister! My old lady died——"

"Oh, Tom——"

"Say, that's the reason why I couldn't come t'Flossie's, see?"

She sobbed. He smoothed her elbows.

"Renie, come upstairs 'n meet my sister. Stay with her t'night."

"Tom, oh—!"

The young girl's lips sought out her lover's in the darkness. He gave her back her kisses. And they went upstairs . . . . . And on a world which held but two descended then the peace and quiet of a perfect understanding.

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THE KILLER

(*Continued from page* 13)

Late that night Smith uncovered a small foot in the upper berth. The instep was badly bruised and already discolored and commencing to swell. He applied liniment from a bottle and bound the foot in a large handkerchief. So deftly did his fingers work that the boy was not sufficiently disturbed to waken.

This work of kindness accomplished, Smith selected a tiny drill from a kit of tools and, choosing an inconspicuous spot, bored a hole through the partition which separated his drawing-room from the adjacent compartment. With his eye to the small aperture he was just in time to see a frail, old man slipping into his pajama coat. Before the coat was buttoned there was visible for a few seconds, against the white skin, a black case suspended by a strap from the shoulder. Smith laughed good-humoredly.

After breakfast, the next morning, Smith walked out on the observation platform at the end of the train for his morning cigarette. It was early and only two other passengers were taking the air. One of these was Keegan, who smoked a cigar with his feet on the railing. The other was the man from the compartment next to Drawing-room A—the man with the black case strapped next to his skin. He was small and delicate in appearance, with eyes that were rather sad. He, alone, spoke a pleasant "Good morning" as Smith came out.

"I was just reading about that cold-blooded murder in New York," he added as he laid down a Kansas City paper.

"You mean the double murder of the magnate's daughter and the chauffeur?" asked Smith.

"Yes," said the little man. "The murderer stole a huge emerald that the girl was wearing. My name is Scoville and I'm a jeweller in Los Angeles. Emeralds interest me. I care more for them than for any other stone."

"Any new developments in the case?" asked Smith.

"No," replied Scoville, "and I suppose it will be a thing of the past in a few days. The girl left some friends after the theatre and took a taxi to go home. It is supposed that the murderer jumped into the taxi as it was moving off and that the chauffeur didn't notice him. The police theory is that the girl was stabbed to death while the taxi was in the middle of Broadway, and that the murderer then waited until they were in a lonely section of Central Park before shooting the chauffeur through the back of the head. He must have been quite an athlete to jump out after shooting since the taxi smashed up pretty badly and must have been travelling at considerable speed."

"No clue at all?"

"Nothing except a page from a note-book which the murderer may or may not have dropped. The page had a few figures which apparently mean nothing to the police."

"What are the figures?" suddenly asked Keegan.

"The figures are 1463046B," answered Scoville, reading from the paper.

"Humph!" grunted Keegan. "Not much to that."

"A great deal," returned Smith, "and as plain as the nose on your face."

Keegan looked swiftly at Smith.

"What do you make of it?" he asked.

"The first two figures are fourteen," began Smith very cooly. "They probably represent a day of the month. Yesterday was the fourteenth. The next three figures probably represent time and might designate 6.30 P. M. which was the time that train left Chicago. The next two figures are forty-six which is the number of this car. Last of all is the letter B. which is the letter on the door of your compartment, Mr. Scoville."

THE old jeweller's face turned slowly red and his jaw fell open in amazement.

"A strange coincidence," he managed to gasp and a hand stole up to his side as if something lay beneath his vest.

"Of course it's a coincidence," laughed Smith, "but it looks badly for you, Mr. Scoville. The murderer stole a big emerald and you have just confessed to a partiality for that particular kind of stone."

THE old man rose from his chair rather nervously and walked back into the car without a word.

"By——!" exclaimed Keegan. "For a clever man you are the biggest fool I ever met. Tomorrow we will be out West and you will get a bullet through your gizzard if you keep on butting into other people's affairs."

"Uh huh," said Smith. "I suppose so."

Strangely enough the same three men found themselves on the observation platform after an early breakfast on the following morning. This time Jimmie was with them and his eyes were wide open at the great stretches of desert which were beginning to appear. Occasionally the train passed weather-beaten toilers on the arid land—Mexicans and half-breeds—riding their horses or mules in stolid silence beside the steel rails. Many of these men were armed, their guns hanging loosely at their sides. Jimmie's imagination ran riot with each new sight.

It was as if the world of the East had been left behind and, in its place, a certain sense of lawless freedom seemed to surround the train which held its old time security only in its rapid flight. Keegan, too, seemed to have changed, for he was wearing a western riding costume. When his coat fell back Jimmie saw that a heavy gun was strapped to his side. Several times the boy glanced at his master and there was disappointment in his heart because Smith wore no gun and was still the sprawling, lazy man who had sat so quietly in a taxi with a stunned and dirty dog in his lap.

There was no conversation until the train ran on to a siding and came to a stop. Not a human habitation was in sight.

Suddenly Keegan pulled out his gun and, with cool indifference, fired at a glass insulator on a telegraph pole. The glass splintered and the single line of wire sagged down from the pole.

"Rotten destruction of property," commented Smith.

"——!" grunted Keegan with a sneer. "I'll lay you a hundred dollars on a little shooting contest."

"Get my gun from my suit-case, Jimmie," said Smith, extending a bunch of keys.

The boy returned on the run with a belt from which hung a heavy gun in a holster. His eyes were shining with excitement and the last trace of a limp had vanished from his step.

Keegan climbed down to the track and Smith vaulted lightly over the railing, landing upon his toes and bending his knees as does the trained athlete. A little knot of early risers, attracted by the shot, had gathered upon the open end of the car and stood around the old jeweller as they watched.

It was a pretty contest, but not in doubt after the first shot. Keegan stood a tin can upon one of the rails at about the distance of fifteen paces. Smith placed himself on the right of the rail and Keegan took up his position on the left while Scoville gave the word to fire. It was really a contest in drawing for the victor was the man who knocked the can on to his opponent's side of the rail.

At the first trial Smith drew very fast, throwing his weapon upward and lowering the barrel to fire. He did not fire, however, for Keegan shot from the hip and sent the can spinning upon Smith's side. At the second trial Smith drew with even greater speed and fired upon raising his gun to arm's length. He fired too late, however, for Keegan shot again from the hip and the can lay upon Smith's side.

"Satisfied?" taunted Keegan.

"Uh-huh," said Smith. "Here's your hundred."

A little round of applause broke from the group of passengers as Keegan climbed back on to the end of the car. Smith swung himself up with his natural agility and handed his gun over to Jimmie, whose face was the picture of misery as he walked back through the car with the dangling weapon. To see his wonderful master defeated in public by the man he hated was almost too much for Jimmie.

AS the train for which they were waiting thundered by, their own train pulled slowly out on to the main track, Smith turned to Scoville.

"Just thought of an explanation for those figures which that killer dropped in the taxi in New York," he said.

Keegan hitched his chair a little nearer and lighted a fresh cigar.

"What have you thought of?" asked Scoville.

"You probably bought some valuable stones—perhaps emeralds—in New York before the murder took place."

"That is true," admitted the old jeweller.

"And probably you also made your reservation for this train before the murder," continued Smith.

"Ye-es, I did."

"Are you perfectly sure of the good reputation of the dealer from whom you bought the stones?"

"No," returned Scoville. "It was a cash transaction, and I can depend upon my own judgment of precious stones."

"Did he see your reservation ticket for this train?"

"He bought it for me!" exclaimed Scoville.

"THEN," went on Smith very quietly, "he presented the murderer with a memorandum of your reservation so that he could rob you. You can rest assured that the New York killer is on this train."

A sudden look of fear came into Scoville's eyes at Smith's words. At sight of it Smith rose but, before departing, spoke mysteriously over the jeweller's shoulder.

"Don't be afraid. I know who he is and I'll keep an eye on him."

"Cracked!" ejaculated Keegan, tapping his forehead as Smith walked away. "I thought he was just a fool but I guess there's a screw loose."

The last day, before reaching California, the train ran into a swelter of heat in the Arizona desert. Passengers gasped and fanned themselves and tried to sleep but without success. As many as could do so crowded upon the small observation platform at the end of the train. Among these was Keegan, cigar in mouth and feet on the railing as he tilted back in his chair while a number of ladies stood.

Jimmie was, perhaps, the only one on the entire train who did not feel the heat and who did not wish to take a nap. The novelty of a trans-continental trip was still with him and, in addition, Smith was no longer the man of the East. After lunch Jimmie had returned from a visit to his dog in the baggage car with the information that the white dog, belonging to Keegan, had disappeared.

"Go find that dog," directed Smith.

When Jimmie returned to Drawing-room A he found his master in snug-fitting riding-breeches. He was coatless and wore a gray flannel shirt, open at the neck. All this Jimmie saw, but he saw something more and his eyes became saucer-like as he stared. From a belt, which Smith was wearing, hung two guns—one on either side.

"Find the dog?" asked Smith.

"Yep," returned the boy as he continued to stare. "De white mutt's sittin' on Keegan's lap in de monkey-house at de end of de train."

Smith looked out of the window and consulted his watch.

"Take this pocketbook, Jimmie," he suddenly said. "There is enough in it to take you and Lemon back to Chicago."

Tears welled into the boy's eyes as the words sank home.

"I don't want yer kale, Mr. Smith," he answered as his lips trembled. "If yer tired of me I'll work my way back."

"It isn't that," said Smith taking one of the small hands in his. "You have been a great help to me. Perhaps we will be fine pals in the future, but I want you and Lemon to have a good trip home in case I go to the undertaker this afternoon."

The boy swallowed hard and really wanted to put his head against the flannel shirt and have a good cry.

"Den I'll take de coin," he said, struggling hard to suppress his emotion. "It'll pay de corpse catcher fer de two of us. I s'pose I'll have tuh smuggle Lemon outa de baggage car. Dey can't croak us widdout dat mutt comin' too."

"And now for your orders," said Smith, breaking into a severe voice.

"Yes, sir," replied Jimmie, standing very straight and rigid.

"Watch Scoville and Keegan. Bring me word every time either of them moves. If anything happens sit tight and do not leave this car till it's over."

AS the afternoon wore on and the train wound its way over the hot sands of the desert, the observation platform remained crowded. Keegan continued to sit with his feet on the railing with his small white dog by his side. Scoville occupied a chair upon the opposite side and partly dozed in the intervals of watching the monotonous landscape.

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Other passengers came and went, and presently Jimmie pushed his way through the crowd with the yellow head of his dog sticking ridiculously from underneath his coat. The boy noted the different passengers and made sure that Keegan and Scoville were both present before squatting down on a corner of the platform with his dog.

It was a little before the first call for dinner that the train came to a dragging halt in the center of a bit of sandy expanse that was as desolate as it well could be. From behind a bit of rock, close to the track, a man rode out toward the rails in rear of the train. Behind him he led a second horse. He was a picturesque figure as he rode onto the ties and turned toward the train, both horses walking between the rails. As he approached, however, the passengers, who crowded forward on the platform for a better view, saw that his features were streaked with sweat and dust. His eyes had a savage gleam that was far from pleasant and a gun at his hip added to the menace of him.

Some of the passengers, more timid than the others, fell back from the brass railing as the man drew up within a foot of the car. They were too late, however, for the next second the man jerked his gun from its holster and held them transfixed. One man tried to sneak through the door and there was a roar as a bullet cut through the door and smasked a window behind him.

"The next shot will kill," said the horseman. "Hands up!"

As the hands went up, Keegan reached over to Scoville and jerked open his vest.

"Come on, hand it over and be dam' quick!" he ordered.

The little jeweller slumped, half fainting in his chair, and Keegan, without waiting, tore open his shirt and underwear. His big hand seized a black, leather case which lay underneath and, with one powerful wrench, he snapped the suspending strap with such force that the old man was jerked to the floor where he lay a huddled heap.

"This is worth the job alone," Keegan called to the horseman. "A hundred thousand dollars worth of emeralds! Clean up the rest of this bunch while I go through the two rear cars. Shoot to kill. It's the best way."

As Keegan disappeared into the car the horseman took a canvas bag from behind his saddle and held it out.

"Put your valuables into this," he ordered. "There's a rail off the track ahead and there's lots of time, so don't forget anything. After you're finished I'll search three of you and shoot the one that's held back a nickel."

During the few tense minutes which followed, Jimmie squeezed a quarter and a dollar bill into his shoe and looked wildly around for Smith but that lanky individual was not in sight. All Jimmie could do was to sit tight as he was ordered and he did so and hugged his yellow dog without anybody paying the slightest attention to him.

It was only a few minutes, although it seemed ages, before Keegan returned tying the neck of a canvas bag. He picked up his dog and dropped him to the ground before stepping over the brass rail and slipping into the saddle of the spare horse. At the same time the last watch and roll of money was dropped into the horseman's bag and the whole handed over to that swarthy person.

The two men on the horses looked for a minute at the cowed passengers on the rear platform. Contemp uously they returned their guns to their holsters and were on the point of trotting away when a cold voice spoke from the sand at a point about twenty paces from the track.

""You forgot my watch!"

HOW Smith had reached that point none of the passengers ever knew. It may have been that he crawled through the sand, for Jimmie found sand in his shirt that night. To those who suddenly saw him standing there, coatless and hatless, with guns swinging by his side, it seemed as if he had dropped from the sky. The hold-up men, too, were astonished for they wheeled their horses and faced the lone man for a second of silence. During that second Jimmie's heart began to beat so that he a mo t became dizzy.

"If I only had a gat of me own!" he mumbled to Lemon and got the dog's ear in his mouth.

"Have you the courage to acknowledge that you are the killer of the girl in the New York taxi?" asked Smith.

"Hell, yes," sneered Keegan. "I'll lay you a hundred"—to his companion—"that I can drill this bird before you do."

Three men reached for their guns with the speed of lightning. Only two guns were fired and both ho semen toppled to the ground. Smith had shot from the hip with both hands.

As Jimmie jumped to the ground and ran toward his master the train conductor came out on the platform.

"I thought I gave orders that there was to be no more pistol practice," he began and stopped in astonishment at sight of the two men lying between the rails.

"Hold up men" explained Smith briefly. "One of them is the New York murderer. I was trailing him but couldn't get absolute proof until he acknowledged it just now."

"Den yer not a crook!" shouted Jimmie, dancing around Smith. "Gee! I'm so glad, me stummick's upset!"

Midnight Dollars

(*Continued from page* 15)

Manhattan was as crowded as usual. The city in July and August had a floating population made up for the most part of out-of-town visitors and rural emigrants, who vacationed annually in the island metropolis. It was the transients who kept the theatres open and the huge department stores busy. Trant joined the fluent tide of traffic, setting his steps in the direction of Sixth Avenue.

When he reached it and was debating whether or not to turn uptown, he perceived in the crowd a heavy-jowled, red face that was instantly familiar. A glance introduced him once more to O'Keefe, one of the plain clothes men who had visited him so few hours past. The detective, with half of a cold cigar tucked away in a corner of his mouth that needed no stretching of the imagination to be called arrogant, was pursuing a leisurely course northward up Sixth Avenue. Hardly aware of why he did it, Trant fell into step a dozen paces behind him.

IT might, he considered, be the merest folly—this idea of trailing a plain clothes man. Still O'Keefe had sworn to put the bracelets on Sanford and the fat scoundrel was the axis on which a goodly portion of the mystery revolved. Therefore it argued, there was about one chance in fifty that O'Keefe was bound on some errand that concerned the gentleman in question. Trant had a vague impression that when a plain clothes man was assigned to the duty of "getting" someone badly wanted, he stuck to that task until the prey was "jeweled."

Up past Bryant Park, over the threshold of Forty-second street, the Hub of the Universe, by the Hippodrome, O'Keefe ambled, to turn sharply into the side street some five more blocks further on uptown. Trant realized that inasmuch as the street was untenanted, it might be a wise procedure to employ some measure of caution.

Accordingly, he crossed to and stood under, the lowered awning of an apothecary shop on the opposite corner. From this point of vantage, he watched O'Keefe go up the stoop steps of a house that was fifteenth in order from Sixth Avenue.

The house, Trant perceived, appeared to differ but little in shape, size or appearance from its neighbors. It was four stories in height, built of murky brown stone, with a tin cornice around the roof and characterized by a stodgy air of respectability. Perhaps its only distinguishing marks were iron gratings over the first and second floor windows.

When O'Keefe had vanished within and Trant wandered past, he saw that its shallow areaway was occupied by a colored boy, who flushed it out with a hose. Trant went east to Fifth Avenue, paused there and frowned portentously. The voice of logic told him that he was wasting time. Intuition, that stealthy sixth sense that stirs in minutes of stress or predicament, gave him to understand, on the other hand, that there was some significance to the dwelling O'Keefe had entered.

He turned on his heel and walked slowly back to take up his former position under the awning of the drug store. He consulted his watch and found ten minutes had elapsed since the plain clothes man had entered the house. Another ten dragged by before O'Keefe appeared and strolled back to Sixth Avenue.

From his appearance and gait, there was nothing to tell the observer whether or not he was pleased or disgruntled over the result of his errand. The cigar clamped between his prominent jaws was still at the same jaunty angle. His bulky shoulders had neither a swing nor a droop to them. If he had unearthed any important clues concerning the elusive Sanford, he displayed no visible sign of them.

While Trant, who had drawn well back to avoid recognition, was contemplating the next step, O'Keefe had boarded a southbound surface car—making further pursuit a dexterous feat. Slightly vexed because his shadowing of a plain clothes detective had been crowned with no high degree of success, Trant, about to move on, caught a glimpse of someone coming down the steps of the house with the window gratings.

This was the slim, well-built figure of the young man in whose poise was the suggestion of decided familiarity. Trant stared hard as the other approached, looking neither to the right nor left. A little, unexplainable thrill shot through him when the other was opposite, and all at once he knew and understood. It seemed, at that moment, as if a new factor had entered the arena of mystery, for it was slightly disconcerting to behold one in the flesh who was popularly supposed to be enjoying the beauties of Maine; one who came out of a house which a detective had just left; one whose apartment had echoed to no sounds of life.

The young man was no other than the Barry Grantley who had been responsible for Trant's landscape gardening commission in the Berkshires!

V—OVER THE WIRE

ABOUT six o'clock the same evening the front doorbell of Trant's apartment tinkled. Barry Grantley, sleek and polished in dinner jacket and patent leather dancing-pumps, sauntered in. He was a trim, darkly handsome young man, who gave the appearance of just having left the hands of a capable valet. His black hair was brushed away in ripples from a forehead that might have been broader. His face was lean and untanned, his eyes seemed shadowed by some secret worry, belied by the smiling twist of his lips. Trant sensed the fact that, for all the spontaneous gaiety in his greeting, there was a certain note in it that led him to believe it was false.

He concluded that his friend was either a good actor or a past master in the art of hiding his emotions.

"I thought you'd get that job over with in record time," Grantley said, helping himself to a cigarette and a chair. "Any word from my devoted uncle? I understand he's sailing from Cherbourg on Friday, but when Uncle gets away from the bank he's a wild 'un. No telling when he's likely to drop in. Did you get paid for the job?"

"Only the advance fifty percent," Trant replied. "However, I'm not worrying. I know the bill is good. Been away, Barry?"

Grantley crossed both well-tailored legs and inhaled a cloud of smoke.

"Yes," he answered slowly. "I've been up in Maine. I only got home an hour ago."

Trant's eyes narrowed slightly. What was Grantley's object in telling a direct untruth? He shrugged, meeting his friend's eyes when Grantley lifted his gaze, seeing again the disguised shadow of trouble in their depths.

"I stopped in," the other went on, "to ask if you had anything of particular importance on for tonight. I've reserved a table at the *Chanson d'Or*. I'd like to have you fill in. Got," he added, with another quick smile, "to jazz it up a bit after rusticating up in the wilds near the Canadian border. How about it? Tyler Harrison's coming and a couple of young ladies from the Byzantine Roof. If you shake a wicked foot, there's your chance. The girls are dancing demons."

Trant reflected rapidly. He knew something of young Grantley's past supper parties—the majority of which had been presided over by a certain Miss Nellie Adair, who was formerly a blonde chorus queen to whom Grantley had paid ardent court the previous year. Miss Adair had evidently discouraged Grantley's suit, for when her last show had taken to the road he had ceased to rave about her and thereafter had sought to forget in the whirlpool of Broadway.

"I'll be glad to go, and thank you very much," Trant said after a pause.

Grantley stood, pulled down his fashionable waistcoat and let the smile haunt his lips again. At that precise minute, with the lamplight painting his handsome face, it seemed to Trant that he bore a strange resemblance to someone whose identity had persisted in eluding him.

"That's the spirit," Grantley said vibrantly. "Ten o'clock then, in the foyer of the hoofery. Don't be late, please. I had the devil's own time

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getting Pierre to hold a table for me. I called him up the minute I set foot on civilized land again."

Trant promised to be punctual and the other said something about an engagement at his club and departed hastily.

When he returned to the living-room after showing his visitor out, a rankling sense of perplexity made Trant's preoccupied expression moodily thoughtful. Could it be possible that the net of the mystery stretching now wove its dark skeins about the person of Barry Grantley? Surely, if there was anything at all in a reasonable deduction, it was plain that Grantley was in some way implicated in the affair of the satchel. Not alone that he had come out of the same house Detective O'Keefe had penetrated or the misstatement concerning his arrival in Manhattan, but the voice of intuition again—intuition, Trant believed, that had prompted him more than anything else in accepting the invitation for the *Chanson d'Or*. He decided he wanted to study his friend. . . .

TRANT'S taxi turned into Broadway just as the hands of a huge clock further up the White Way joined at the hour of ten. It had rained spasmodically during the elapsing hours and a noticeable coolness prevailed. The hurried pavements of Broadway echoed to the march of countless feet, motor traffic was a long, sinuous ribbon that never ceased unwinding and the muted growl of the city was the sinister chuckle of a comedian. Withal, this thoroughfare had a charm of its own, an individuality and an appeal to be found nowhere else in all those scattered cities that girdled the globe.

The *Chanson d'Or* was one of the few smart restaurants and cafes that had survived the arid blight of prohibition. A stone's throw south from the Winter Garden, it was wedged in between a million-dollar motion picture theatre and a tall, new office building, whose lower floors were given over almost entirely to the offices of popular music publishers. The *Chanson d'Or* was three stories in height, a squatty building of white stucco, pseudo-Spanish in architecture with arched windows, a balcony along its second floor and flamboyantly striped awnings. Behind ruffled curtains of orange silk grotesque shadows moved. The murmuring of music crept out now and then and the clash of cymbals, the loud thump of an eccentric drum.

A tall starter opened the door of Trant's cab. He paid and dismissed the driver and sauntered into the foyer, where he discovered almost at once the lounging figure of Tyler Harrison, a young gentleman who had more than once been referred to as Grantley's "side kick." Harrison was typical of the new generation of the idle rich. He was not unprepossessing, but a languid person, beautifully and expensively garbed in clothing that fit so well he might have grown in them. He was blonde and blasé, the proud possessor of an infinitesimal mustache that had been drawn out and waxed in two needle points.

He gave Trant a nonchalant hand and a melancholy smile. "I say, Trant, where's old Barry? I've been staggering around here since half past nine without a sign of him. I had an appointment with him at the Plaza at eight, but he didn't show up there either. Can't understand what's gotten into him. He always used to be so punctual."

Trant sat down on the lounge. Back in the restaurant proper the orchestra was erupting into another spasm of jazz. He waited until the saxophone ceased to laugh and told Harrison what he knew about Grantley. By this time it was three after ten.

"Something wrong," the blonde youth averred. "Barry's not the sort to overdo it. And then there's the question of the girls. They're only in the first act up at the Roof and are all finished after nine. That's just a step down the Alley. He was to meet and bring them up here. I wonder," he mused, "if he ran into Nellie Adair? She's in town, you know. I saw her myself yesterday afternoon on Fifth Avenue."

Trant lifted his gaze.

"Nellie Adair?" he repeated.

Tyler Harrison inclined his head. "Barry used to be awfully sweet on her, you know. Quite a case, really. Then something turned up—nobody knows what—and, bingo—Barry crossed the street whenever he saw her coming! Just as well, though. Nellie wasn't his sort at all, and Barry's uncle, Grantley Page, is a horrible stickler for the conventions. I told the lad to watch his step more than once. Be jolly awful to have uncle hand him the bird, you know."

Trant thought of the first of his midnight visitors. "Is Miss Adair a blonde? Has she blue eyes? Is she rather attractive?"

Harrison shook his head. "No, she's a brunette. Got a pair of black eyes—remarkably large and luminous and all that sort of thing. Rather a stunner, if you like that type."

"Does she," Trant hazarded again, "live in a private house on Forty-eighth street between Sixth and Fifth Avenues?"

"Not so far as I know. Used to live at the Prince Charles whenever she was in town."

Further conversation was terminated by the appearance of an affable gentleman, whom Trant took to be the manager of the cafe.

"You're wanted on the telephone, Mr. Harrison," he stated.

The blonde youth rose with alacrity. "I say, pardon me. This is probably the culprit on the wire now."

HE disappeared around a bend in the corridor that emptied into the foyer. Trant listened absently to the music and the shuffle of dancing feet. The image of the girl with the blue eyes and blonde hair tiptoed back to him oddly. Where had she gone? Where was she now? Was he destined ever to see her again? More important, who and what was she? Speculations were vain. She had come and vanished like a picture on the silver sheet, suffering what was known as a "fade out." And the satchel with the fifty thousand dollars! Had *she* taken it away with her, and, if so, had she known he had hidden it in his kit bag? In the City of the Seven Million the ships that passed in the night were dim shapes that went down to unknown seas and were never seen again! He found this thought appalling.

Tyler Harrison made a morose appearance.

"I say, Trant, here's a pretty state of affairs. Don't know what's getting into Barry, really! A bounder's trick, absolutely. He gets some friend to call up and say that he's sorry but he won't be able to be with us tonight. Business engagement—isn't that the limit?"

Indignation choked him.

"Perhaps," Trant ventured, "something of importance turned up he didn't calculate on when he made this date."

"Then why didn't he telephone himself and not let someone else make his apologies? Someone I never even heard of before—a chap who said his name was Sanford—don't know him—absolute stranger!"

Trant felt an electric thrill. *Sanford*! In a flash the unkept appointment seemed explained. Through some stroke of misfortune, Barry Grantley had fallen into the power of the fat rogue who, learning of the rendezvous at the *Chanson d'Or* had sardonically telephoned to break the appointment. If Grantley did not appear and a search failed to reveal his presence, an alarm could be raised. A pretended business engagement might make his guests disgruntled but not suspicious. Was this reasoning correct? Trant shook himself. It had come alive and full bodied into his mind. The links of the mysterious chain were fitting smoothly into each other.

It must be, he concluded, correct.

"Well," Tyler Harrison murmured with a sigh, "inasmuch as the party's off, I suppose I might as well toddle around to the Byzantine and pacify the ladies. I'm the white-headed boy when it comes to dispensing the soothing syrup."

He made his adieu and disappeared through the front entrance, his stick at a drooping angle, his shoulders bowed. Trant presently retrieved his own headgear and left the blatant cafe. What next? If Sanford had woven a web about Grantley, O'Keefe and his aid were the ones to know about it. But first Trant deemed it wise to move with discretion. It might be well to go slowly and learn first how correct he was.

Ruminating thus, he reached Columbus Circle and took an eastbound Fifty-ninth streeth car. His street, when he turned into it, was somberly quiet, filled with the wan shine of the street lamps. His own building was lightless, save for a subdued glare in the basement window, where a phonograph playing last year's records seemed to hint that the Chevalier Dugan was entertaining a few of his friends—a supposition heightened by the clink of home-brew filled glasses. Trant slipped a thin latchkey into the lock of the door, opened it and went upstairs. On his own landing he paused, debated briefly and decided finally to ascend to the next story. He turned to the door that gave into Barry Grantley's apartment.

A low-powered electric light supplied an insufficient illumination. Trant dropped a hand over the knob, neither surprised nor astounded when it turned under his fingers and the door itself yawned into stark darkness. Listening for sounds of some of the other tenants returning, but hearing nothing, he struck a match, cupped it in his palms and examined the lock. It had been neatly jimmied, ripped ruthlessly from the tin covering of the so-called fire-proof door, where it now dangled disconsolately from a single screw that held it in place. The absence of marring marks around the frame of of a visitation of a marauder expert with the steel-tipped implement of his profession.

TRANT left the door open until he found the hall wall-switch and had snapped the electricity on. Then he closed it and, not without a flutter of his pulses, sought the living-room. The apartment was a duplicate of his own and furnished similarly, with the exception of a heavy portiere that shielded the inner room from the hall. Trant brushed this aside, kindled the lights and stepped back with a stifled exclamation.

The room revealed in the dawn of the center chandelier was in a cyclone of disorder. A high secretaire presented gaping drawers, whose contents had suffered a vast upheaval. A library table had been rifled, the cushions on the divan adroitly slashed open, half the contents of a closet strewn across the floor and the Oriental rug itself dragged back—as if the miscreants, not satisfied with a frustrated search, had delved under the floor covering itself to find what they sought.

Trant invaded the bedroom. The wires of the telephone on a little mahogany stand had been cut but there was nothing the trouble with the bedroom lighting system, which functioned as perfectly as it had in the other rooms. The bed, Trant saw at a glance, had not been slept in for some time. The mattress had been folded over and draped with a dust-protecting sheet.

Here there was some upturning of bureau drawers and closet, but none of the confusion of the other chamber. There was nothing further to behold, no other evidences of the handiwork of Sanford or the fat picaroon's accomplices seeking the fifty-thousand dollar treasure hoard! Trant put out all the lights, closed the front door quietly and went into his own rooms.

Sleep, when he had crawled in between the sheets, was impossible. His stimulated fancies crowded his mind with thoughts erratic and fantastic. In the morning Dugan would learn that Grantley's apartment had been entered and the police would come to investigate the outrage. What had happened to the upstairs tenant and how had Sanford trapped him? It was long after midnight when Trant finally fell into a doze and then drifted into a heavy, dreamless slumber.

How long he slept he had no way of knowing, as on the other night he awoke with a start, his ears assailed by the insistent clamor of the telephone ringing in the foyer hall. The midnight blackness filtered in under the drawn shades and lay in murky puddles along the floor and surbase.

With his heart beating heavily, Trant reached the telephone and silenced the bell by unhooking the receiver and placing it at his ear. The sing and hum of the wires, a droning buzz and a metallic grating were the first things he heard—elfin echoes that seemed to come from a land of strange discords. He moistened sleep-dry lips and spoke.

"Mr. Trant?" a voice seemed to say from miles distant. Then, as he acknowledged his identity, in quick, frightened tones the voice went on, "Sanford has the satchel with the money! He's taken me up here—if you can help—I'll tell you just exactly where——"

The girl with the blue eyes and blonde hair.

The thrill that shot through Trant was like the sputter of fireworks. He wound his fingers around the receiver, the tingle and excitement of the drama coming to him through the night, while the voice of the girl, so rapid now as to be unintelligible, continued:

"Wait!" he said almost sharply. "I can't understand you. Please speak more slowly. Where are you? What has happened? Where are you?"

His words seemed to steady her somewhat.

"I'm here at a place called Plun——"

At that minute her voice broke off on the fragment of the word. Followed a faint reverberation that was like a muffled hammer stroke in a void of quiet. Then faraway words, so low as to be almost unheard:

"*Don't . . . . oh, please, don't*——"

After that a click, the buzz and hum of the wires again.

"Number, please?" the voice of Central cut in mechanically.

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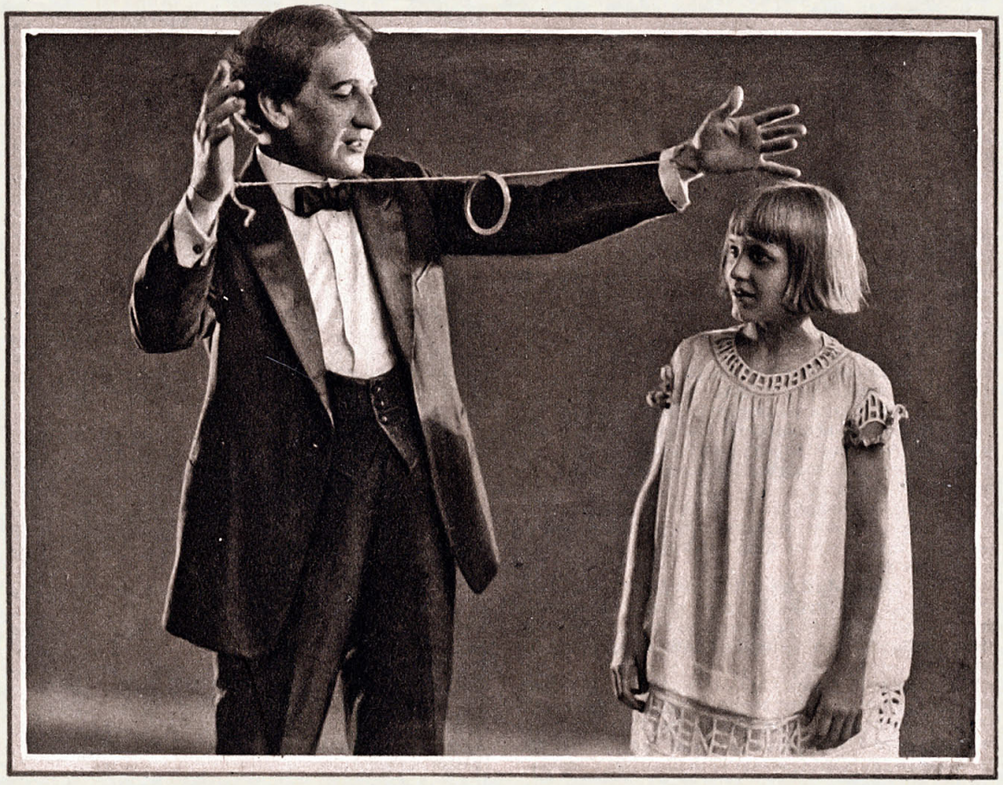
Easy Tricks that You Can Do

By HOWARD THURSTON

World's Master Magician



The Enchanted Bracelet

THE magician offers for examination a glass armlet, known as a Chinese bracelet. He then allows both of his wrists to be tied securely with a stout piece of cord and the knots may be sealed. About three feet of rope is left loose behind the wrists.

The magician then takes the examined and wholly innocent bracelet in his hands and then turns very slowly completely around. When he is again facing his audience, the bracelet is on the rope. Just as easily he can remove the bracelet by turning around in the opposite direction.

The secret of this trick is exceedingly simple, as is the case with all good tricks. Another bracelet is on the arm of the magician up near the elbow. It is an exact duplicate of the one examined by the audience. As the magician turns around, he drops the examined bracelet into his vest pocket and slides the second one down from the elbow and onto the cord.

Midnight Dollars (*Continued From Preceding Page*)

VI—OUT BACK

IT was only a step from the table in the living-room to the open door of the bedchamber—another to reach the bed itself, delve under it and drag out the kit bag into which the girl with the blonde hair and blue eyes had seen Trant lock the satchel containing the fifty thousand dollars. With her fingers tight about the kit bag's double handles, she swung around, peering into the gloom that was reverberating with the thud of flying fists and the rattling gasps of harried breaths.

There was obviously nothing she could do to aid Trant—if that was her object or desire. The figures of the contestants were little better than dark shadows that flitted across a darker screen. And to switch on the lights would be to disclose the fact that she was in possession of the precious kit bag and its contents. There was but one thing to do under the circumstance, and that, unless disaster was to be invited, must be done immediately.

Hesitating no longer, the girl crept back into the living-room. It appeared that the battle was ebbing somewhat in its intensity. The flutter of heavy, racing breaths joined, but the echo of blows was now infrequent. The girl darted a swift look at the open window across from her, circled the table and, murmuring an inner prayer, stepped over the window sill and an instant later was out on the secure ledge of the fire-escape, the kit bag banging against her knee, triumph warming her pleasantly.

Yet she had been taught to understand in the last few days the caliber of the man pitted against her. This initial success must not deceive her. She had trumped her opponent's ace and had taken this first trick in the game that was being played, but there were other aces still in the deck and trumps did not last forever.

With this firm in mind, she set her slippered feet on the iron steps of the fire-escape ladder and, handicapped but little by the bag, rapidly descended to the first floor landing. The three empty soap boxes she had placed on top of a squatty ash can still stood directly beneath her. She deftly lowered herself to the top box and, with a sigh of relief, felt the cement pavement of the backyard solid and steady under her thin soles.

There was little danger of arousing the worthy Dugan—the basement windows of his apartment were black shields on which her reflection was etched grotesquely. The way to the street led through a narrow whitewashed passage that ended at the foot of some steps. With another little sigh, the girl came out on East Sixty-fifth street, into a district where Respectability slumbered and nothing disturbed the quiet save the pounding of an open surface car that bowled past.

The Third Avenue "L" with a convenient station was only a few blocks distant. The girl made her way to it, not without a shiver of apprehension when she passed a patrolman who eyed the kit bag sharply but, to her infinite relief, did not halt her.

On the train platform she had to wait almost twenty minutes before a southbound train came along. It was that hour of the morning when the tumultuous tempo of Manhattan's symphony for a space lost its quickening beat. From the window of the car, in whose furthest corner the girl had huddled, the view was a panorama of roof tops, an ineffably dreary wilderness, slashed with the canyons of the side streets.

The train, containing only two or three heavy-eyed passengers, rattled on. The girl began to think of Trant's apartment, of the battle. Who had conquered? She dared not hope that Trant, by sheer courage and cleverness, had routed his intruder and had summarily put him in bonds and turned him over to the Law. Such reckoning was too much like a glittering dream. This rogue against whom she was matching her wits seemed to have an abundance of luck to aid his diabolical cleverness. No, she dared not lead herself to believe any stroke of good fortune had cleared her path. In the next twenty-four hours she would be called upon to put into the balance all of her courage, all of her intelligence, all of the relentless force that had pushed her on into these strange labyrinths whose reward was the dollars of danger in the satchel within the kit bag reposing at her feet.

She knew she must not falter, could not—until the task was over.

Another installment of this baffling tale next week.

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Ask Madame Pythagoras

Do you want to know the truth about yourself? Can you stand the truth? Let Madame Pythagoras tell you—she is yours to command.

Hundreds of names have been sent in. It is quite impossible to give any answers privately—so it is useless to send addressed envelopes. As many as possible will be published each week, in order of receipt, so please be considerate and state clearly whether name or initials should be printed.

She Knows

DORA AND EDDIE D.—Your last name is a good check to your first names—no matter how you spell them; the last name is diplomacy and tact and good business ability order, and exactness are shown. Dora is a headstrong impulsive see-it-through-to-the-last-ditch sort of vibration—she needs the last name vibration to steady her; Eddie is one of domineering, "my-way-is-the-right-way" kind. Edward is a better vibration—temperamental and moody but yet better with the last name.

DOROTHY C., El Paso, Texas.—Dorothy is the better name. Drop the other one. Your last name carries a very good vibration—intellectual, sympathetic and thoughtful.

ANITA COOK, Wash.—Very good combination of numerals. Rather stubborn in opinions, but good sense and judgment to balance. You are very ambitious, but lack self-confidence—You should cultivate that.

OLGA J., Brooklyn.—Olga is a good name. Thoughtful, studious and kind. Your Path of Life is the vibration assigned to Fate—meaning that you should do the things that come your way to do, one step at a time rather than to try to jump to a given point, or make any radical change in your circumstances.

ROSE B., City.—Nines dominate your vibrations, which means that you go into everything "head-over-heels," as hard and as fast as you can make the grade—whether it is work or play—you work hard and finish it, before you stop. You also have threes prominent in your vibration—therefore, you have a keen sense of humor, are fond of a good time, like pretty bright cheerful things and would be a good comedy actress.

JENNIE B.—You are a mixture of characteristics. You like romance, sentiment, and love stories; also, you are practical, orderly, a bit stubborn, cheerful, witty, and moody. You are at present, a little of everything. You would have to decide upon some one thing and stick to it—you do not stick to things easily—so it would be an effort, but that is necessary to your success—otherwise you may not develop the ability you have.

GEORGE R. S., Dayton.—Pardon the liberty, but since you ask me for advice I must give it: Don't dissipate your talent and your vitality and your opportunities so much. It is all right to take life as a joke, but you can't take opportunity as a joke—if you do, the joke turns out to be on you. Less self-satisfaction and more application and concentration will ultimately give you more to laugh about—more that's worth while.

ARTHUR I. T., Mexico Mo.—Well, well! Another poor "March-hare"—I'm one myself so know how it feels. You want a lot of things at once and don't care enough about any one thing to go after it and stick—that's you all over.

CHARLOTTE M., Milwaukee.—Well, Charlotte, you have a nice name—regular "movie" name. You like the theatre too—but you are also studious and kind and a lot of other things. A really very well-balanced name, and after all, as you have the motherly vibrations, it would be better for you to settle down and be a good home maker. There are so few these days. What do you say?

VINCENT DE S.—Another one of those Valentino-like names. You are an impulsive, go-ahead sort o person. You don't miss much that is doing, especially when it comes to active lines. I don't know whether you are married or not, but I'd suggest that you find yourself one of those sixes—they make a good balance-wheel for an impulsive man who isn't inclined to save his money, and at the same time they stay at home.

ROSE G.—You're a dissatisfied person Rose—I can tell it by the combination you vibrate to—you'd like a perpetual good time and this old world hasn't yet awakened to the fact that we need to play a lot—a very great lot, if you had your way. You're clever tho—can dance and dress artistically and you are cheerful enough—keep your friends laughing—which is doing a lot of good. Marry a nice ambitious eight with a two or four lurking somewhere in the background of his vibrations.

STEPHEN V. K.—Your vibrations are not necessarily inquisitive, but they are inquiring—how else does a person learn anything new? You are rather impulsive, but you have good business judgment, so your headstrong nature displays itself in your dealings with people—you do not read character as well as you might. You have energy and an "infinite capacity for taking pains" that is said to be the formula for genius.

IRIS, St. Louis.—You have a good combination. One thing you lack however, is application. You don't stick. You want to get results without too much expenditure of time and effort. You like your own way—most of us do, but you especially. And it isn't always the best way—Still you have ability and can do well when you try.

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Hay Fever, Catarrh, Asthma Instantly Relieved by New Invention

Results Guaranteed—Try This New Method Without Obligation

How the discovery of a famous nose and throat specialist instantly relieves congestion and inflammation of the respiratory passages and removes the cause of the trouble. Can be used everywhere and at all times—at work, at play, at the theatre, at home, asleep in bed. Invisible, convenient and comfortable.

HERE is welcome news for all sufferers from Hay Fever, Summer Colds, Asthma or Catarrh. A remarkable new method has been found that brings instant GUARANTEED relief. No more need you spend money on harmful drugs, narcotics, or patent medicines in a vain effort to find relief. Breathe-O-Tol, the discovery of a famous nose and throat specialist, is not a patent medicine. It is nothing to swallow, nothing to smear inside your nose. It contains no habit-forming drugs or narcotics. It can be used anywhere, and any time during the day or night. It is practically invisible, and so comfortable that you will never realize you are using it, except for the relief you get. Your physician will tell you that Breathe-O-Tol is the most sensible, the safest, and the most efficacious remedy for your trouble.

How Breathe-O-Tol Brings Instant Relief

Hay Fever, Catarrh, and other respiratory diseases arise from the presence of germ-bearing spores, especially prevalent during the summer and fall months, which inflame and irritate the delicate membranes of the upper nasal ducts and tracts. The only way to remedy these troubles is to destroy the germs. Breathe-O-Tol does this by nature's own principle of inhalation.

Breathe - O - Tol provides pure, medicated air which is inhaled naturally, attacking the disease-bearing spores, relieving congestion of the mucous membrane of the nose, throat and lungs. Swelling is reduced, clogged nostrils opened, breathing made easy and natural. You can enjoy the healing, antiseptic effect of Breathe-O-Tol through the day and night without effort on your part, and without the slightest inconvenience. The patented inhaler is practically invisible, so it can be worn everywhere. It consists of a little silvered device which slips into the nose and holds two medicated cartridges treated with a special combination of oil of pine needles, menthol, oil of eucalyptus, camphor and other scientific healing and antiseptic agents. There is no interference with breathing. The air you inhale is treated by contact with the medicated cartridges so that it immediately clears the head and destroys the germs present in the nose and throat.

The amazing success of Breathe-O-Tol in thousands of cases has made it possible for us to make this unusual offer: If Breathe-O-Tol does not bring you instant relief, it will not cost you a penny.

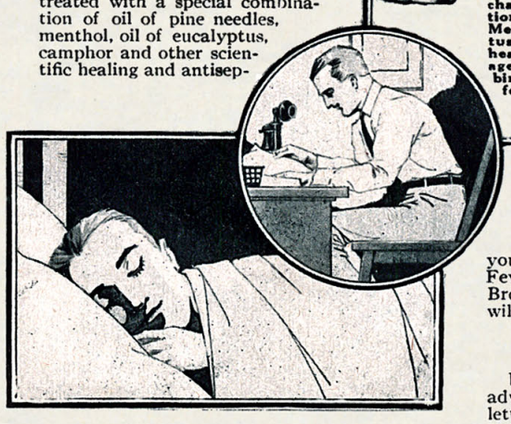
Hundreds of letters received from sufferers from nose and throat troubles testify to the wonderful relief obtained through Breathe-O-Tol.

But the best proof you can have of Breathe-O-Tol's power to end your own particular trouble is to try it for yourself. You are invited to do this without risking any money. Whether you are suffering from Hay Fever, Rose Fever, Asthma, or from Colds, Catarrh and Bronchitis, you are guaranteed relief or there will be no cost to you for the trial.

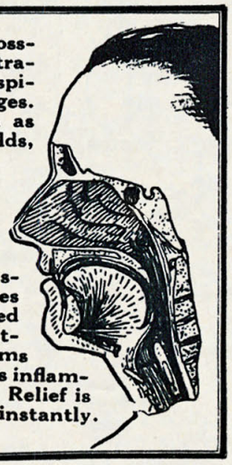
Breathe - O-Tol is easy to use. Simply insert the patented inhaler into the nostrils and forget about it.

Inhaler Pat'd

Breathe-O-Tol consists of the patented inhaler and the medicated cartridges. Each cartridge is charged with a combination of Oil of Pine Needles, Menthol, Oil of Eucalyptus, Camphor and other healing and antiseptic agents, carefully combined, according to the formula of a famous nose and throat specialist.



This is a cross-section illustration of the respiratory passages. Diseases such as Hay Fever, Colds, Asthma, Catarrh, Bronchitis, etc., are caused by germs entering these passages. Supplies pure medicated air, which attacks the germs and removes inflammation. Relief is obtained instantly.



SEND NO MONEY

It isn't necessary to send one penny in advance. Merely mail the coupon or write a letter and the patented Breathe-O-Tol outfit, consisting of Inhaler and full supply of medicated cartridges, will be sent to you by return mail. Simply pay the postman $2.00 plus postage when the package arrives. Then try Breathe-O-Tol for five days. If you are not delighted with the relief you receive; if you do not feel confident that it will gradually remove the difficulty entirely, send it back at our expense and your money will be refunded in full immediately. We could not make this offer unless we were absolutely sure that Breathe-O-Tol will do everything we say it will.

Stop suffering. Don't dose yourself with drugs or medicines. Try this new invention that has proven so beneficial in the most severe and long-standing cases.

Remember you take no risk whatever by sending for the Breathe-O-Tol outfit to use for five days. Mail the coupon NOW before you can forget. Be sure to specify whether you want Set A for Colds, Catarrh and Bronchitis or Set B for Hay Fever, Rose Fever and Asthma.

PROOF

Words cannot say enough in praise of your wonderful discovery. I have suffered from Catarrhal headaches for four years. I have spent loads of money on doctors and chiropractors, but nothing gave me relief. Since using BREATHE-O-TOL, I have not had a sign of a headache.
Edward J. McCleary,
Belmar, N. J.

The set received here today gave my boy, who is a sufferer from Hay Fever, almost instant relief.
Clarence F. Norment,
President,
National Bank,
Washington, D. C.

Just received Set "A" and tried it out last night for the first time and pleased to state that I am well pleased with results. *Insomnia has been my trouble.*
Robert E. Cleary,
Spokane, Wash

Breathe-O-Tol is a magic worker for Hay Fever. It brought me instant and continuous relief throughout the day, and permitted me to enjoy a perfect night's rest. I highly recommend it.
J. Lewis,
New York City.

The Breathe-O-Tol Laboratories
D C-231 , 1400 Broadway, New York City

The Breathe-O-Tol Laboratories
DC-231 1400 Broadway, New York City

Please send me patented Breathe-O-Tol treatment as follows

( ) Set A for Colds, Catarrh and Bronchitis.
( ) Set B for Hay Fever, Rose Fever, and Asthma.

I will pay the postman $2.00 plus postage on arrival, and will try it faithfully for five days. If I am dissatisfied in any way, I will return the outfit to you and you are to refund my money in full at once.

Name.....

Address.....

City..... State.....

Orders from Canada and Foreign Countries must be accompanied with money orders.

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